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Postal Service Says Shape Matters

Money-saving pricing approach takes effect May 14

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A new Postal Service approach to pricing will reshape the future of mail on May 14, enabling customers to save money by in some cases simply folding the contents of an envelope. The new pricing system is based on the shape of mail, not just the weight, reflecting the fact that the costs for handling letters, large envelopes and packages differs. Customers can reduce their mailing costs simply by choosing different packaging.

For example, if the contents of a First Class Mail large envelope are folded and placed in a letter-sized envelope, customers can reduce postage by as much as 39 cents per piece. If the contents of a First Class Mail package are laid out to fit into a large envelope, customers can save 33 cents per piece.

Shaped-based pricing, in effect, creates a more flexible rate system by giving mailers the opportunity to obtain lower rates if they find ways to configure their mail into shapes that reduce handling costs for the Postal Service and that helps to keep rates affordable for everyone.

With the new emphasis on shape in its pricing, the Postal Service is also reducing the additional ounce rate on May 14. As mail pieces become heavier, the new additional ounce price declines. For letters over one ounce, the new prices are actually lower than the current prices. More information about the new pricing can be found at <http://www.usps.com/ratecase>.

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An independent federal agency, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that visits 146 million homes and businesses, six days a week. It has 37,000 retail locations and relies on the sale of postage, products, and services to cover its operating expenses. The Postal Service has annual revenues of \$73 billion and delivers nearly half the world's mail.

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