



POSTAL NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Nov. 24, 2008

Contact: Gerry Kreienkamp
202-268-3744
gerald.r.kreienkamp@usps.gov
www.usps.com/news
Release No. 08-125

Mail Holiday Packages with Care

Tips from Your Holiday Shipping Experts

Washington, DC — With 19 billion cards, letters and packages expected to be delivered this holiday season, the U.S. Postal Service has some tips to help get gifts to their destination swiftly and safely.

“The Postal Service is making it easier to ship packages to family and friends this season,” says Deputy Postmaster General and Chief Operating Officer Patrick R. Donahoe. “Proper addressing and proper packaging will help us give every gift the service it deserves.”

The Postal Service offers free, environmentally friendly Priority Mail and Express Mail boxes and envelopes. These supplies can be ordered at usps.com or picked up at a local Post Office.

“The best shipping value may be our Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes,” says Donahoe. “No calculating of postage or weighing is needed. If it fits, it ships.”

The Postal Service also offers pre-packaged shipping products, READY POST, sold at local Post Offices for customers needing sturdy, secure boxes and envelopes.

“Save money on Priority and Express Mail prices when you mail online with Click-N-Ship,” adds Donahoe. “The more you ship, the more you save. And when a package is ready to be shipped, log on to usps.com/pickup to schedule free package pickup from home or office. Skip the trip and do all of your shipping online.”

Helpful **packaging** tips:

- Make sure packages are able to withstand processing without the contents or packaging breaking.
- Cushion items with bubble wrap, newspaper, or “foam peanuts” so they do not shift during transit.
- Wrap each item separately when packing more than one item in the same box.
- Remove batteries from electronic devices and wrap separately.
- Close and shake the box to see if there is enough cushioning. If items are shifting, add more cushioning.
- Mark packages “Fragile” in large print on the outside of the box when shipping materials that might be more likely to break.
- When re-using a box make sure previous labels and markings are covered before mailing.
- Mark “Perishable” on packages that contain food or other items that can spoil.
- Place an extra address label with the delivery and return address inside the package. This ensures the safe return of an item that could not be delivered should the outside

- label become damaged or fall off.
- Always use tape designed for sealing shipping boxes. Do not use string, cellophane and masking tape to seal packages.
- Packages can weigh up to 70 lbs. and measure up to 130 inches in combined length and width. Make sure the width is measured around the largest point of the package.

-more-

Guidelines for **addressing** envelopes and packages:

- Print complete address clearly.
- A complete address includes:
 - the recipient's name
 - Post Office Box or street number
 - street name
 - suffix (Ave., St., etc.)
 - directional (N, S, E, W)
 - secondary address (apartment or suite number)
 - city, state and 5-digit ZIP Code
 - For example: 123 S. Main St. Apt 4, Washington, DC 20001
- Use the proper ZIP Code. ZIP Codes can be found at *usps.com* or by calling 1-800-ASK-USPS.
- Print the delivery and return addresses on the same side of the envelope or package.
- Always use a return address. It tells the Postal Service where to return mail if it cannot be delivered.

The Postal Service recommends the following mail-by dates to ensure your gift arrives on time:

Dec. 4 — Military mail destined for Iraq or Afghanistan
Dec. 11 — Military mail for other overseas bases
Dec. 16 — Parcel Post, the most economical shipping service
Dec. 20 — First-Class Mail
Dec. 20 — Priority Mail
Dec. 23 — Express Mail

Due to security requirements, packages bearing postage stamps that weigh more than 13 ounces must be presented to a retail associate at the Post Office and cannot be dropped in blue collection boxes.

Find more holiday tips and information at

<http://www.usps.com/communications/newsroom/2008/holiday/hpr.htm>.

#

Please Note: For broadcast quality video and audio, photo stills and other media resources, visit the USPS Newsroom at www.usps.com/news.

An independent federal agency, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that visits every address in the nation, 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 pay for operating expenses, not tax dollars. The Postal Service has annual revenues of \$75 billion and delivers nearly half the world's mail.

