

specifications for nonconforming mailers for use of top caps, stacking of pallets, pallet box construction, and maximum height/layers of trays in 2.0 through 4.0. After July 1, 1996, mailers will be suspended from the pallet program if their pallets continue to fail to meeting the minimum standards for load integrity levels.

## 2.0 TOP CAPS

### 2.1 Use

Top caps are used as follows:

a. Except under 2.1b and 2.1c, all pallets of sacks, letter mail trays, parcels, packages or bundles of mail, or pallet boxes must be top-capped if the pallets are double- or triple-stacked when presented to the USPS for acceptance.

b. The top pallet need not be top-capped if the strapping or banding securing the stacked pallets together neither damages the mail on the top pallet nor allows the stack to shift.

c. Lower pallet(s) containing either parcels or packages or bundles of mail need not be top-capped if the top surface of each pallet load provides a sturdy, flat surface, parallel to the pallet base, that provides safe and efficient stacking of pallets placed on top and prevents sliding of the top pallet(s), damage to the loaded mail, or crushing of the load.

### 2.2 Construction

Any material may be used as a top cap if it provides a flat, level surface horizontal to the base pallet, protects the integrity of the mail below while supporting a loaded pallet above, and allows easy entry of a forklift to remove the upper pallet(s). Flimsy paper or fiberboard (e.g., the ends of paper rolls) or similar material is inadequate and may not be used as a top cap.

### 2.3 Securing

A top cap must be secured to the pallet horizontal to the plane of the base pallet, with either stretchwrap or at least two crossed straps or bands, so that the top cap stays in place to protect the mail and maintain the integrity of the pallet load.

### 2.4 Nonconforming Mailers

Nonconforming mailers (see 1.4) must use top caps on all pallets of sacks, letter mail trays, parcels, or packages or bundles of mail, regardless of weight, or on pallets containing pallet boxes 60 inches high or less. Top caps must be approximately 48 by 40 inches and meet one of these construction standards:

a. Five-wood boards, with uniform edges and nine-leg pallet contact for stacking.

b. Fiberboard box-end style, with a minimum 3-inch side and wall material of at least double-wall corrugated fiberboard C and/or B flute.

c. Fiberboard honeycomb covered on both sides, with heavy linerboard at least 1/2 inch thick.

d. Corrugated fiberboard C flute sheet covering the entire top of the load, with standard pallet solid fiberboard corner edge protectors.

## 3.0 STACKING PALLET

### 3.1 Double- or Triple-Stacking

Pallets may be double- or triple-stacked if:

a. The combined gross weight of the stacked pallets (pallets, top caps, and mail) does not exceed 2,200 pounds.

b. The heaviest pallet is on the bottom and the lightest is on the top.

c. The pallets are secured together with at least two straps or bands of appropriate material to maintain pallet integrity during transportation and handling. Stretchable or shrinkable plastic wrap be used to secure stacked pallets together until July 1, 1996.

d. Pallets are top-capped under the standards in 2.0.

e. The combined height of the stacked pallets and their loads does not exceed 84 inches.

### 3.2 Nonconforming Mailers

Nonconforming mailers (see 1.4) who stack pallets are subject to the conditions in 3.1, except that triple-stacking is allowed only for pallets of parcels and the combined height of stacked pallets may not exceed 77 inches.

## 4.0 PALLET BOXES

[Renumber current 4.0 through 6.0 as 5.0 through 7.0; add new 4.0 as follows:]

### 4.1 Use

Mailers may use pallet boxes constructed of single-, double-, or triple-wall corrugated fiberboard placed on pallets to hold sacks or parcels prepared under M042, M043, or M044. Single-wall corrugated fiberboard may be used only for light loads (such as lightweight parcels) that do not require transportation by the Postal Service beyond the entry office. The boxes must protect the mail and maintain the integrity of the pallet loads throughout transportation, handling, and processing. The base of the boxes must measure approximately 40 by 48 inches.

### 4.2 Maximum Height

The combined height of the pallet, pallet box, and mail may not exceed 77 inches, except that until July 1, 1996, the combined height may be up to 84

inches. The contents of the box must not extend above the top rim of the box.

### 4.3 Securing

Pallet boxes must be secured to pallets with strapping, banding, stretchable plastic, shrinkwrap, or other material that ensures that the pallets can be safely unloaded from vehicles, transported, and processed as single units to the point where the contents are distributed with the load intact if:

a. The pallet and its contents are transported by the USPS from the office where the mail is accepted to another postal facility where the contents are distributed.

b. The weight of the mail in the box is not sufficient to hold the box in place on the pallet during transportation and processing, a pallet box must be secured to the pallet base.

### 4.4 Nonconforming Mailers

Nonconforming mailers (see 1.4) may use pallet boxes only if the boxes are constructed of triple-wall corrugated fiberboard (C and/or B flute material) with a maximum height of 77 inches.

## 5.0 PALLET PREPARATION

[Renumber 5.3 as 5.8; add new 5.3 through 5.7; revise renumbered 5.0 as follows:]

### 5.1 Presort

[Delete the "s" at the end of "Pallets" in the first sentence.]

### 5.2 Minimum Load

In a single mailing, the minimum load per pallet is 250 pounds of second-class, third-class, or fourth-class packages and bundles of mail, parcels, or sacks (or three layers of letter trays of second-class or third-class mail), except that the processing and distribution manager of the facility where a mailing is entered may issue a written authorization to the mailer allowing preparation of 5-digit or 3-digit pallets containing less volume if the mail on those pallets is for the service area of that facility.

### 5.3 Required Preparation

A pallet must be prepared to a required level of sortation when there are 500 pounds of second-, third-, or fourth-class packages, bundles, sacks, or parcels (or six layers of letter trays of second-class or third-class mail).

### 5.4 Maximum Weight

The maximum weight (mail and pallet) is 2,200 pounds for a single pallet.