

2.4 Other Contents

Other elements of the carrier route information line include:

a. The carrier route information must be preceded by at least two asterisks (**) or other distinctive nonalphabetic or nonnumeric characters.

b. At least 10 spaces must be allowed for carrier route information if included with other information on the top line.

c. Carrier route information lines may also contain the markings required by standard for the class of mail and rate claimed if all the information remains on a single line with the basic information (required by 2.1) at the right end (e.g., on a carrier route package of Enhanced Carrier Route Saturation rate mail):

* * * * * ECRWSS**C-001

POSTAL CUSTOMER

M020 Packages and Bundles

1.0 BASIC STANDARDS

[Relocate current 1.1, 1.4, 1.5, and 1.7 to M011; renumber current 1.2, 1.3, and 1.6 as 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3, respectively; revise renumbered 1.3, and add new 1.4 as follows:]

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1.3 Labeling

Unless excepted by standard, packages must be labeled using the pressure-sensitive package labels specified in the standards for the class and rate being prepared. On letter- and card-size mail, the label must be placed in the lower left corner of the top piece in the package. On flat-size mail, the label must be placed on the address side of the top piece in the package. Optional endorsement lines may be used in lieu of pressure-sensitive labels, subject to M013.

1.4 Palletization

Packages and bundles placed on pallets must be able to withstand normal transit and handling without breakage or injury to USPS employees. Heavy-gauge shrinkwrap over plastic banding, only shrinkwrap, or only banding material is acceptable if the package or bundle can stay together during normal processing. Packages and bundles placed on BMC and mixed BMC pallets must be shrinkwrapped and machinable on BMC parcel sorters; machinability is determined by the USPS. If used, banding material must be applied at least once around the length and once around the girth; wire and metal strapping are prohibited.

1.5 Exception

Fewer than the minimum number of pieces required by the standards for the rate claimed may be prepared as an individual package without loss of rate eligibility in that regard under either of these conditions:

a. A greater number of pieces would exceed the maximum physical size for a package *and* the total number of pieces for that presort destination meets the minimum volume standard (e.g., 30 pieces are available to meet a 10-piece minimum, but a package of 8 pieces is 6 inches thick).

b. The pieces constitute the "last package" for a presort destination *and* previously prepared packages met the applicable minimum volume standard (e.g., 505 pieces prepared in ten 50-piece packages and one 5-piece package).

2.0 ADDITIONAL STANDARDS—PREFERRED PERIODICALS AND NONPROFIT STANDARD MAIL (A)

2.1 Nonautomation Rate Mailings

Nonautomation rate mailings are subject to these additional standards:

a. The maximum thickness for packages of other than walk-sequence rate letter-size mail is 6 inches. The maximum thickness for packages of letter-size walk-sequence rate mail is 4 inches.

b. Packages of letter-size mail up to 1 inch thick must be secured with appropriate banding applied around the girth. Thicker packages must be secured with at least two bands, the first placed around the length and the second around the girth so that the second band crosses over the first.

c. When preparing mail bearing a simplified address, all pieces for the same post office must be tied in packages of 50 whenever possible. If packages of other quantities are produced, the actual number of pieces must be shown on the facing slip that must be attached to show distribution desired (e.g., rural route, city route, post office boxholder).

2.2 Automation Rate Mailings

Automation rate mailings are subject to these additional standards:

a. The maximum thickness for packages of letter-size mail is 6 inches.

b. Packages must be prepared for mailings consisting entirely of card-size pieces, and for mail placed in AADC trays (except for residual AADC trays) and in mixed AADC trays (package-based mailings) or overflow trays (tray-based mailings).

c. Packages must not be prepared in full trays in tray-based mailings of larger

than card-size pieces except in residual AADC and mixed AADC trays and as permitted by standard for oversize pieces.

d. Packages must be secured with rubber bands, elastic strapping, flat plastic strapping, or string placed once around the girth (narrow dimension) on packages up to 1 inch thick. Thicker packages must be tied twice, with the first rubber band or elastic strap placed around the length and the second around the girth, crossing over the first. Additional ties may be used if none lies along the outer 1 inch of any package edge.

e. Elastic strapping must have a minimum strength of 15 pounds and a minimum of 150% elongation prior to break. Minimum tension, when applied to bundle, must be 50% breaking strength. Elastic strapping may not be used unless approved by USPS Engineering. A mailer wanting to have elastic strapping material tested for acceptability must provide 25 packages (five each: 6 inches, 4 inches, 2 inches, 1 inch, and 10 pieces) strapped with the tested material. The mailer must send the material with a letter of request at least 6 weeks before the planned date of mailing to USPS Engineering. The mailer is notified in writing by the USPS. If the USPS approves the material, that letter (showing a unique number) serves as evidence that the material meets USPS standards. A copy of the letter must be attached to each mailing statement provided for mailings that use the tested strapping material. The mailer must be able to show when requested that the strapping material on a mailing is the same as that tested.

f. Separator cards:

(1) May be used instead of packaging (except for card-size pieces) to identify groups of pieces in 3-digit and SCF trays in package-based mailings.

(2) May be prepared from any paper or card stock.

(3) Must be at least 1/4 inch higher than the highest piece in the mailing.

(4) Must be placed in front of the corresponding groups of mail.

g. Except in package-based mailings under M895, if groups of presorted pieces are identified by separator cards, the required pressure-sensitive package label must be placed on the separator card or in the lower left-hand corner of the first piece behind it. Alternatively, the words "5-Digit" or "3-Digit," as appropriate for the group, may appear on the separator card. The pressure-sensitive label or the descriptive words (if placed on the separator card) must be at the top of each in a position that can be easily read when the card is in a tray.