UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®

New Address Standards
for
Commercial Flat-Size Mail

Title Slide

Agenda

Today, I'm here to talk about the new address standards for commercial flat-size mail that are effective in March 2009. First, we'll cover the new requirements for address characteristics and address placement that were published in the *Federal Register.* Then we'll go through some examples and frequently asked questions, and wrap up with some resources available to you.

New Address Standards

New standards for the delivery address on commercial flats specify:

- **Minimum type size**
- **Horizontal and vertical character spacing**
- **Placement within the top half of the mailpiece**

New Address Standards

The new standards affect the delivery address on commercial ("discount" or "bulk") flats and specify three things: a new minimum type size, new character spacing requirements, and placement within the top half of the mailpiece. We will talk about each of these items in more detail. But it may be helpful as we go through the presentation to think of the new standards in these simple terms.

New Address Standards

The "delivery address" is:
- Recipient lines
- Delivery address lines
- City, state, ZIP Code

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New Address Standards

The new standards apply only to the delivery address on the mailpiece, which we define as the recipient lines; delivery address lines; and city, state, and ZIP Code line.

For the purposes of the new standards, the "delivery address" does not include the barcode or other elements that may be printed with the address, such as a carrier route information line or an optional endorsement line.

New Address Standards

New standards ensure readable addresses for:
- Accurate sorting
- Accurate delivery
- Accurate redirection
- Speedy service

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New Address Standards

The new standards create consistent addressing for flat-size pieces and increase efficiency in flats processing and delivery operations. Clear, readable addresses ensure accurate sorting, delivery, and redirection, and allow us to process and deliver mail as quickly as possible. The new, standardized address placement will help us take advantage of new flats processing technology and can significantly reduce the time carriers spend orienting mailpieces to read the address.

Flats volume exceeded 52 billion pieces in 2007 and represented about one-quarter of the total mail volume. The new address standards provide a significant opportunity to improve efficiency and keep flats prices as low as possible.

Address Characteristics — Minimum Size

- All presorted and carrier route flats must be addressed using at least 8-point type.
  - Each letter or figure must be at least 0.080 inch high.

- Flats using an 11-digit POSTNET or an Intelligent Mail barcode may use 6-point type if the address is printed in all capital letters.
  - Each letter or figure must be at least 0.065 inch high.

Address Characteristics — Minimum Size

First, let's talk about the new standards for address characteristics — how the address itself is formatted. On all presorted, carrier route, and automation flat-size mailpieces, mailers need to address each piece using a minimum of 8-point type or, if the mailpiece bears a POSTNET or Intelligent Mail barcode with a delivery point routing code, a minimum of 6-point type in all capital letters.

We also provide the minimum type sizes in inches, for mailers who need to program systems that do not use points.

Address Characteristics — Style

Two preferences for best read rates:
- Sans-serif font.
- ALL CAPITAL LETTERS.

Address Characteristics — Style

We included two preferences that help ensure readability for our optical character readers and for our carriers. These are not required, but whenever possible we encourage mailers to choose a sans-serif font ("block" style letters such as Arial or Helvetica) and to address each piece in all capital letters.

Address Characteristics — Spacing

Additional standards for <u>automation</u> pieces only:
- Address characters cannot overlap.
- Address lines cannot touch or overlap (0.028-inch clearance preferred).
- Address elements may be separated by no more than five blank spaces.

Address Characteristics — Spacing

In addition, for all automation pieces, the characters in the address must not overlap, the address lines must not touch or overlap, and each address element may be separated by no more than five blank character spaces.

These standards exclude most handwritten addresses, because we cannot process pieces with overlapping characters and undelineated address lines with acceptable read rates at the highest speeds required for automation mail. Most machine-printed addresses, including those using "script"-style fonts, will meet the new requirements.

We defined a "blank character space" as equal to the width of the widest letter in the type. This standard will ensure readability and routing accuracy by keeping all address elements associated to the core address block, and not mistaken for extraneous information.

Address Characteristics

This label illustrates the ideal address format, with adequate clearance around the barcode, clearly separated lines and characters, no element set far apart from the address block, and sans-serif capital letters.

[Specific measurements if needed:]

Items A and D are the minimum clearances above and below the Intelligent Mail barcode (0.028 inch). (Minimum clear space above and below POSTNET barcode is 0.040 inch.)

Item B (below address block) represents a typical printer's minimum. (Not a USPS requirement.)

Item C is the minimum clearance to the left and right of the barcode (0.125 inch).

Item E is the recommended clearance between address lines (0.028 inch) to ensure that the characters do not touch.

Address Characteristics

To summarize, the delivery address must be big enough to be readable on all commercial (or "bulk") flats, and it must be spaced properly on all automation flats.

Address Placement

Now, let's turn to the new standards for address placement, which require the delivery address in the upper portion of all Periodicals, Standard Mail, Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, and Library Mail flat-size pieces mailed at automation, presorted, or carrier route prices.

These standards do not apply to First-Class Mail! First-Class Mail flats are typically concentrated in business delivery zones and may be handled in a separate mailstream.
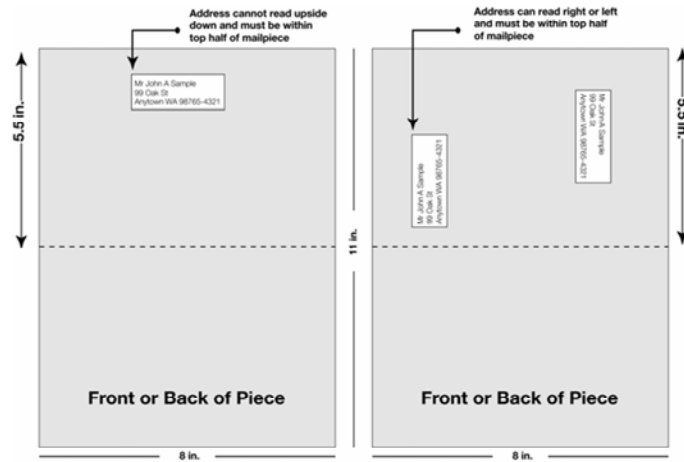
Address Placement

The new standards require the delivery address to appear entirely within the top half. We will talk in more detail about how to determine the "top" of the piece, and what we mean by "top half."

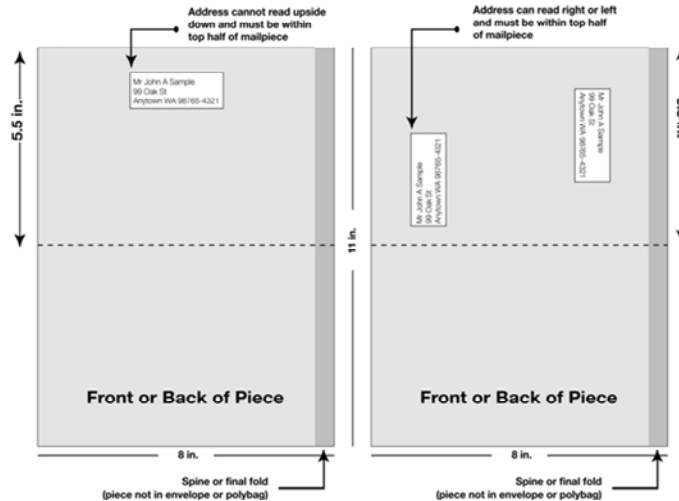**Address Placement — Enclosed Flat**

Address Placement — Enclosed Flat

Let's take a look at some schematic illustrations first, to get a basic understanding of the "top half" rule, and later we'll apply the rule to more realistic-looking mail.

The "top" of the mailpiece is defined differently, depending on whether the mailpiece is enclosed in an envelope or polywrap, or the mailpiece is unenclosed.

For enveloped or polywrapped pieces, the "top" of the mailpiece may be either of the shorter edges. So there are four possible "tops": either of the shorter edges on the front or back of the piece.

Mailers may place the address parallel or perpendicular to the top edge, but not upside-down as read in relation to the top edge. In this example the mailpiece is 11 inches long, so the "top half" is equal to 5.5 inches.

Address Placement — Unenclosed Flat

For pieces that are not enclosed in envelopes or polywrap, the "top" is the upper edge of the mailpiece when the bound edge or final fold is vertical and on the right side of the piece, as illustrated on the slide. It's important to choose a top edge with the spine on the right, because the mailpiece must travel through the flats processing equipment with the spine and open edge in a particular orientation.

So there are two possible "tops": the upper edge on the front or back of the piece, with the spine on the right. Again the address may be parallel or perpendicular to the top edge, but not upside-down as read in relation to the top edge.

There is one important exception for Carrier Route (or Enhanced Carrier Route) saturation pieces: the "top" of the mailpiece is either of the shorter edges, whether or not the piece is enclosed in an envelope or polywrap. These pieces are already sequenced and do not need to be processed on the flat sorting equipment, but we still need consistent address placement so carriers can collate them into their bundles for delivery.

Address Placement

The "top" is:

- Either of the shorter edges on enveloped or polywrapped pieces, and on all Carrier Route (or ECR) Saturation pieces.
- The upper edge when the spine is placed on the right-hand side of an unenclosed piece.

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Address Placement

To recap briefly before we move on, the "top" is either of the shorter edges when the mailpiece is enclosed in an envelope or polybag, and either of the shorter edges on all Saturation pieces (regardless of packaging).

For unenveloped pieces, the "top" is the upper edge when the bound or final folded edge is vertical and on the right side of the piece.

The "top half" rule does not apply to First-Class Mail.

Address Placement

When the address is on an insert polywrapped with the host piece, the address must remain within the top half throughout processing and delivery.
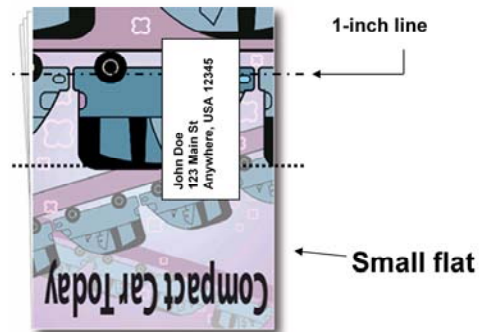
Address Placement

Some mailpieces (often Periodicals) are addressed on an insert that shows through a polybag. That address must stay within the top half during processing and delivery. It doesn't have to be spot-glued. The address must also meet the standards for type size (and character spacing in an automation mailing) that I covered earlier.

Address Placement

If a vertical address will not fit entirely within the top half of the mailpiece, the address may cross the midpoint if it is placed within 1 inch of the top edge. This caveat ensures that mailers can use vertical addresses on shorter pieces, such as digests, where the delivery address might not fit entirely within the top half.

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Federal Register Notice

May 7th final rule available on Postal Explorer (pe.usps.com):

- Click on "Federal Register" in the left frame.
- Scroll down to the "New Address Requirements…" notice.
- Use PDF or Word files because they include the graphics (the "text" file is text only).

Federal Register Notice

All of these addressing requirements are spelled out in the May 7th *Federal Register* notice posted on our Web site. You can access it at pe.usps.com by clicking on "Federal Register" in the left frame and scrolling down to the notice titled, "New Address Requirements for Automation, Presorted, and Carrier Route Flat-Size Mail."

Federal Register Notice

Final rule consists of four parts:
- Supplementary Information — a narrative summary of the new rule.
- Summary of Comments — responds to comments on the proposal.
- Summary of Changes from Proposed to Final Rule — how the final rule differs from the proposal.
- Revisions to the Domestic Mail Manual.

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Federal Register Notice

The final rule consists of four parts. Most final rules follow this format, so it can be helpful to become familiar with it, if you aren't already.

•Part one is the "Supplementary Information," which is a narrative overview of the new rule.

•Part two is the "Summary of Comments," which describes and responds to mailers' comments on our original proposal.

•Next is the "Summary of Changes from Proposed to Final Rule," a brief listing of how the mailing standards in the final rule differ from those that were proposed. This section is helpful if you've been following the proposal and want to see exactly how the final standards have changed.

•Finally, toward the end, you'll find the revisions to the *Domestic Mail Manual.* These are the numbered mailing standards that we will incorporate into the DMM in March 2009.
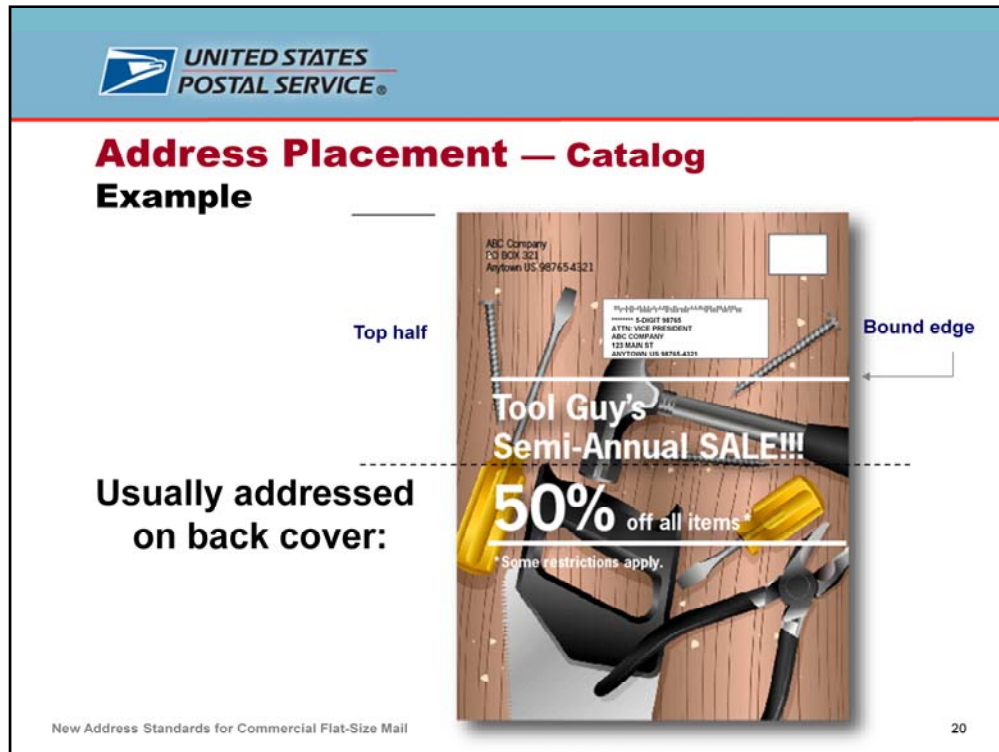
Address Placement — Catalog

Now let's look at some more realistic examples. This is a typical catalog, which is usually addressed on the back cover. The bound edge is on the right-hand side, and the address is entirely within the top half. The address is parallel to the top edge, and it is not upside-down.
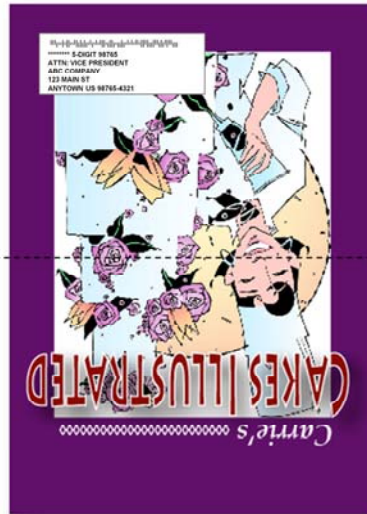
Notice that the postage and the return address are in traditional positions, to the upper right and upper left of the delivery address. The new standards do not change the requirements or recommendations for either of these elements.

Address Placement — Magazine

This is a typical magazine, which is usually addressed on the front cover. The bound edge is rotated around to the right-hand side, and the address is entirely within the top half.

This address is parallel to the top edge, so it reads in opposition to the rest of the type on the cover. The address could also be placed perpendicular to the top edge to avoid this situation, as we'll see on the next slide.
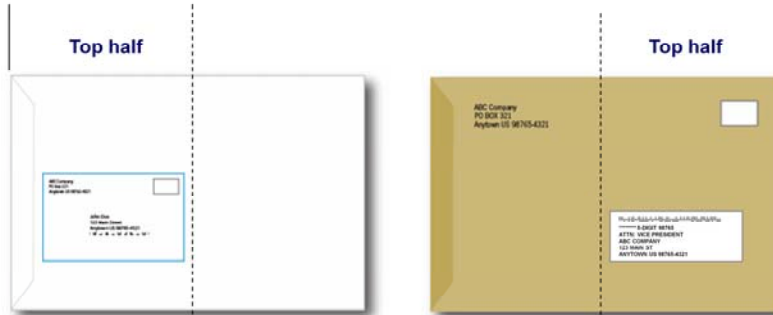
Address Placement — Magazine in Polywrap

This is a typical magazine in polywrap, which is often addressed on an insert on top of the front cover. The top of a polywrapped or polybagged mailpiece is either of the shorter edges.

The address must remain in the top half throughout processing and delivery. Some inserts are large enough to maintain this placement; others may need to be secured in some way.

Address Placement — Large Envelope

Here are a couple of enveloped flats. The "top" is still either of the shorter edges, which means the left or right edge as the piece is held in this landscape orientation. This address is perpendicular to the top edge and within the top half, which means the left or right half if you are holding the mailpiece this way.

Note that these examples show a traditional placement for the delivery address and also the postage and return address. Many mailers use this design, and it's still okay. Just scoot the delivery address into the left or right half if it's crossing the center line.

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Address Placement — Step-by-Step

Identify the "top" of the mailpiece:

- Front or back of the mailpiece.
- Either of the shorter edges, or the upper edge with the spine on the right.
- The "top" has nothing to do with the printing on the piece or how it is constructed. Pretend the mailpiece is a blank object.

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Address Placement — Step-by-Step

[Demonstrate the step-by-step instructions using a real mailpiece, or ask your audience to bring a mailpiece and follow the steps together.]

Let's now look at a real mailpiece and choose where to place the address so it complies with the new requirements. Remember that there are multiple options.

First, we need to identify the "top" of the mailpiece. Decide if you want to address on the front or the back, then choose your top — either of the shorter edges on an enveloped or polywrapped (or saturation) piece, or the upper edge with the spine on the right for an unenveloped piece.

You are choosing a top only for the purposes of address placement — the "top" is not where the envelope is sealed, and it is not the upper edge in relation to the printing on the mailpiece.

Address Placement — Step-by-Step

- Define the "top half." Fold and crease the piece, or measure with a ruler.
- Place the delivery address entirely in the top half. It can be parallel or perpendicular to the top edge, but not upside-down.
- Done with "top"! Now place the postage and return address in relation to delivery address as it is read (postage to the right or upper right, return address to the upper left).

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Address Placement — Step-by-Step

Now that we have a top edge, define the "top half" area. Simply fold the top edge to meet the bottom edge and make a crease, or measure half the distance with a ruler.

Then place the delivery address entirely within the top half. The address can be parallel or perpendicular to the top edge. If it is parallel, do not place it upside-down. If it is perpendicular, it can face to the right or the left.

Now we are done with the top edge and the top half. If you need to add postage or a return address, orient those items in relation to the delivery address as it is read. Put the postage to the right or upper right and the return address to the upper left. If the delivery address is in a spot that does not allow room for these elements, move the delivery address to another location within the top half.
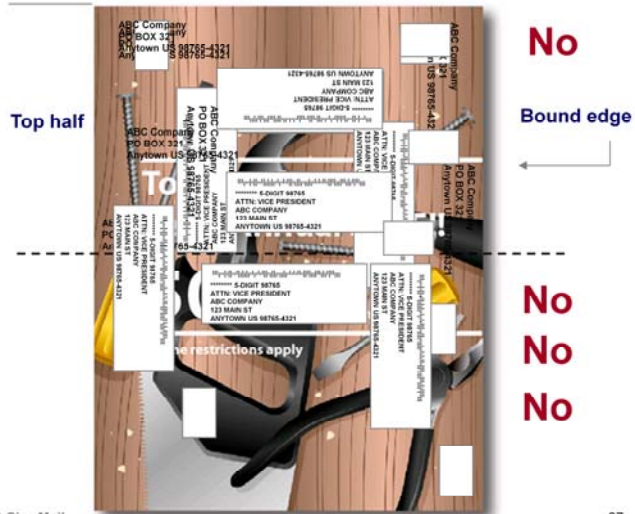
Address Placement — Recap
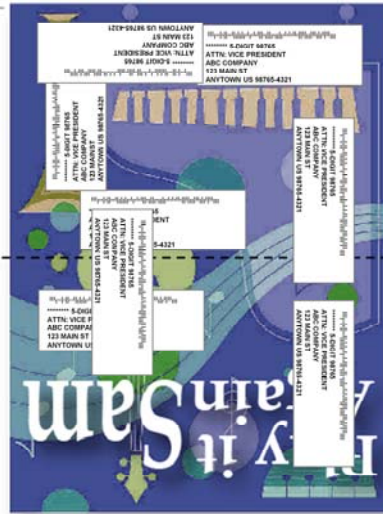
[This slide is a series of builds…keep clicking.]

Remember that the new standards allow many options for placing the delivery address. Let's recap those options on a typical magazine, and look at some placements that do not comply with the new standards.

Address Placement — Recap

[This slide is a series of builds…keep clicking.]

Now let's recap using a typical catalog. Note that the postage and return address are oriented around the delivery address just like they are today. Postage is to the right or upper right, and the return address is to the upper left.

FAQs

- The new standards DO apply to pieces mailed at flats prices because of weight or thickness.
- The new standards DO NOT apply to letter, NFM, or parcel mailings. They DO NOT apply to single-piece mail.
- Optical character readers DO read the delivery address on barcoded pieces.

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FAQs

Here are answers to a few of the most frequently asked questions:

•The new standards DO apply to pieces mailed at flats prices because of weight or thickness. If a mailpiece is too thick or too heavy for letter prices, it's categorized as a flat and all of the standards apply.

•The new standards DO NOT apply to letter, Not-Flat Machinable, or parcel mailings. They DO NOT apply to single-piece mail. We are talking about commercial or "bulk" flat-size pieces only! And remember, the "top half" rule does not apply to any type of First-Class Mail.

•Even barcoded mailpieces need readable delivery addresses. Optical character readers must match elements of the delivery address with the barcode during processing for proper routing and possible redirection. And keep in mind that carriers need the physical address for accurate delivery and to delineate stops as they are walking or driving on their routes.

FAQs

•The new standards do not change the existing standards for use of a return address. Best placement is still to the upper left of the delivery address. Refer to Publication 177 on www.usps.com. We are in the process of updating Pub 177 with the "top half" rule, but the recommendations for return address placement and how to avoid loop mail are the same.

•The new standards do not change barcode placement. The barcode can be printed in the address block or elsewhere on the piece.

•The new standards do not change the existing four options for indicia placement. Place the indicia to the right or upper right of the delivery address as it is read.

Implementation

The new standards are effective on March 29, 2009, almost a year from when they were published. We encourage mailers to use this time to get ready and make any changes that are needed. Don't wait until the last minute!

We are providing many new materials to help mailers prepare. Look for new MailPro articles, a new Quick Service Guide, and new fact sheets and posters.

Implementation

- **Local Mailpiece Design Analysts can help with specific designs.**
  - Use MDA lookup tool on Postal Explorer (click "Postal Locator" in the left frame).
- **Mailers in the National Customer Rulings program can request a written, pre-production decision from the Pricing and Classification Service Center.**
  - More info on Postal Explorer (click "PCSC" in the left frame).

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Implementation

Mailers who need guidance on specific mailpieces are encouraged to work with their local Mailpiece Design Analyst, or through the Pricing and Classification Service Center in New York if they are a member of the National Customer Rulings program. More information about both of these options is available on the Postal Explorer Web site.

Resources

Here are the e-mail and Web addresses for the resources I've mentioned:

Postal Explorer is your source for up-to-date business mailing information and houses the Domestic Mail Manual, International Mail Manual, price lists, and more. We will post the new Quick Service Guide here as soon as it is completed. Remember that this web address does not use the "www" in front of it—just "pe.usps.com."

MailPro is our bi-monthly publication for mailing professionals. Look for ongoing articles about the new address standards.

DMM Advisory is our customer e-newsletter to keep mailers informed of changes to prices, mailing standards, and other important issues. We'll send an Advisory whenever we post new addressing materials, and reminders as we get closer to implementation. If you haven't already, please subscribe and stay informed.

Thank you for joining me today. Are there any questions?