# USPS Publication 52 Revision: Updates to Mailing Standards for Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Materials

*March 28, 2019* —

Effective March 28, 2019, the Postal Service™ is revising Publication 52, Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail, to provide minor changes to mailing standards, enhance clarity, update terminology, and correct erroneous references and omissions.

Effective October 1, 2018, the minimum age for purchasing cigarettes and other tobacco products in the District of Columbia changed from age 18 to age 21. In addition, Hawaii, California, New Jersey, Maine, and Oregon require purchasers of tobacco to be age 21 or older, and Alaska, Alabama, and Utah require purchasers to be age 19 or older. The Postal Service will revise Exhibit 472.25 to reflect the change to the minimum age in the District of Columbia. Postal Service employees must be aware of these requirements and ensure that the sender and recipient meet the required minimum age as specified in Publication 52.

On June 1, 2015, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) updated the Hazard Communications Standard to require a new uniform format for Safety Data Sheets (SDS) (formerly known as Material Safety Data Sheets or MSDS). To reflect the new terminology, the Postal Service will perform a global change throughout Publication 52 to replace the term “Material Safety Data Sheet” with the term “Safety Data Sheet,” and replace “MSDS” with “SDS.” The Postal Service will also add the term “SDS” to the index, and revise Appendix D to include the new OSHA definition.

The Postal Service is aware that lighters fueled by butane and flammable liquids are now used for various purposes. As a result, the Postal Service will replace the term “cigarette lighter” with “lighter” in various sections of Publication 52. With this change, the Postal Service will also update various other references and add clarifying revisions relating to lighters.

In response to requests from mailers of eCigarette nicotine solutions, pesticides, and other nonregulated toxic materials, the Postal Service will relax its current section 346.232 restriction of a single primary receptacle for mailings of some nonregulated toxic materials. The Postal Service will now permit multiple primary receptacles, provided the aggregate quantity of toxic materials are within the specified limits. The Postal Service also updates the references in 346.232 to align with those of the Department of Transportation (DOT), and clarifies the requirement for triple-packaging of liquid nonregulated toxic materials when an aggregate quantity exceeds 4 ounces in a single mailpiece.

To align its dangerous mail protocols with those of other federal agencies, in 2013, the United States Postal Inspection Service® requested that the Postal Service revise Exhibit 347.22, Activity Limits for Mailable Instruments, Articles, and Limited Quantity Radioactive Materials, to align with those permitted by DOT. This revision was made on October 31, 2013. The Postal Service will now revise section 347.2, section 622.3, and Packaging Instruction 7A to specify that the activity limits provided in Exhibit 347.22 apply only to domestic mailings, and that international mailings are restricted to one-tenth of the activity limits provided in Exhibit 347.22.

In response to several recent spills of metallic mercury in its networks, the Postal Service will revise section 348.22g to clarify that UN3506, Mercury contained in manufactured articles, does not include thermometers, barometers, and similar devices containing metallic mercury, and that devices containing enough mercury to be seen with the naked eye are generally nonmailable.

Effective March 28, 2019, the Postal Service will revise Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM®), section 601.3.4, to provide clarified mailing standards for the packaging and markings for mailpieces containing nonhazardous liquids. On July 9, 2018, the Postal Service published a Federal Register proposed rule (83 FR 31712-31713) relating to its intent to revise mailing standards for nonhazardous liquids, then a Federal Register final rule (84 FR 9716-9719) titled “New Mailing Standards for Mailpieces Containing Liquids.” In the final rule, the Postal Service stated that it will revise DMM 601.3.4 relating to mailpieces containing nonhazardous liquids, and similarly revise Publication 52 to align with DMM 601.3.4. These Publication 52 revisions are provided as part of this general update.

The Postal Service will make various revisions to Appendix A to direct readers to section 348.22 for specified acidic materials not restricted to the general 15 percent concentration level limit applicable to most acidic materials. The Postal Service will also revise Appendix A to specify that certain Class 9 materials do not qualify for air transportation as consumer commodity materials, and to correct the mailing standards to specify that UN3164, Articles, pressurized pneumatic, or hydraulic containing nonflammable gas, are under Packaging Instruction 2B instead of 2A.

Other minor revisions in this update include:

n Revising section 325.1, Nonmailable Warning Labels, to add clarity.

n Revising section 335 to clarify that ORM-D markings are prohibited in Postal Service air networks and international mail.

n Revising section 337, Excepted Quantity, to add clarity.

n Revising 343.23, Nonmailable Flammable and Combustible Liquids, to specify acetone, benzene, and hexane are generally nonmailable.

n Revising the definition of oral and inhalation toxicity to align with those used by DOT.

n Adding clarifying language to section 453.35, Drug Paraphernalia.

n Revising the Appendix B listing for UN2796, Sulfuric Acid with not more than 51 percent acid, to reflect the alternate shipping name “Battery Fluid, acid.”

The Postal Service will make various revisions to Appendix A to provide clarity, update language, correct erroneous references, and to better align the information with 49 CFR 172.101, Table of Hazardous Materials. Because of the complexity of the changes, these revisions will be made at a later date.