



<http://sms.dgs.virginia.gov>



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## Options for State Agencies with Obsolete Postage Meters

### Background:

In 1995, the U.S. Postal Service began a phase-out of all mechanical postage meters because of identified cases of indiscernible tampering and misuse. The 'Meter Migration' plan calls for a move from mechanical letterpress postage meters to newer, more secure digital technology.

Postage meters identified in Phase III of the Meter Migration plan may not be used after December 31, 2006.

List of Affected Meters:

[http://www.usps.com/postagesolutions/\\_pdf/meters\\_by\\_phase\\_version11.pdf](http://www.usps.com/postagesolutions/_pdf/meters_by_phase_version11.pdf)

If you have any questions about postage meters or are not sure if your meter can be used after December 31<sup>st</sup>, please contact the State Mail Manager, Gerald Henson.

### Options:

Agencies with postage meters identified by USPS for retirement have three options for outgoing mail after December 31<sup>st</sup>. DGS urges agencies to act quickly in selecting an alternative because of the time required for implementation.

#### **Option 1) Use State Mail Services:**

If your agency does not want the expense of a meter or the hassle of stamps, you may apply to utilize the State Mail Services (SMS) metering service. SMS will pick up outgoing mail from your office and apply postage at the most efficient rate. DGS will send an invoice to your agency each month for the postage used. If your agency is interested, please contact Gerald Henson.

#### *How to Apply:*

Based on the available resources SMS will incorporate agencies into its operations. Agencies with postage meters expiring in 2006 will be given preference. To request SMS metering service, contact Gerald Henson to set-up an appointment for a site visit of your agency's mail operation. Prior to the visit, please complete the Agency Mail Operations Survey. If you have any questions about the survey or appropriate responses, Gerald can assist you during his site visit. Within one week of the site visit, SMS will contact you with information on the start date of SMS metering, pick-up time, pick-up location, and billing information.

*How Billing Works:*

Agencies will be billed only for postage used. Bundle outgoing mail with a paper clip or rubber band and attach a completed Metered Mail Card to each bundle. Agencies have the option of submitting agency budget or cost codes to SMS for the agency's internal tracking of postage costs. SMS will meter the mail daily at the most efficient rate for the size and type of mail. By the tenth of each month DGS will send an IAT to each agency for the total postage used and a report that shows the postage subtotals by agency budget or cost code.

In the near future look for information from SMS on ways to maximize postage savings.

**Option 2) Rent a New Meter:**

Agencies that want to rent a new postage meter or renew a rental for their individual use shall consult with State Mail Services prior to committing to a rental. SMS can assist with determining what equipment is appropriate for the mail volume. Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Directive 3, agencies must receive a waiver from SMS before using one of the mandatory statewide contracts to rent a meter.

**Option 3) Purchase Stamps:**

For agencies with a low mail volume purchasing stamps can be an alternative to using a postage meter. Stamps may be purchased from the following sources:

- US Post Office
- US Post Office Website ([www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com))
- Print shipping labels and postage with Click-N-Ship at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com)
- Websites like [www.stamps.com](http://www.stamps.com) (check [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) for complete list)

Continue using a postage scale to ensure you are applying the appropriate postage.

**Questions:**

If you have any questions about postage meters or mail at the seat of government, please contact the State Mail Manager, Gerald Henson.

State Mail Services (SMS)  
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