

Postage rate increase goes into effect

Written by Wauneta Breeze

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By Carolyn Lee

The Imperial Republican

The cost to mail letters and postcards inside and outside the United States increased as of Jan. 22.

The overall average price increase across all mailing services is capped by law at 2.1 percent.

One-ounce letters mailed in the U.S. will now cost 45 cents, up one cent. Additional ounces on letters will remain unchanged at 20 cents.

Postcards will now cost 32 cents to mail, up three cents.

Letters to Canada or Mexico will increase five cents to 85 cents. Letters to other international destinations will increase seven cents to \$1.05.

Prices also will change for other mailing services, including standard mail, periodicals, package services and extra services.

The overall price change for all shipping services is 4.6 percent, with Priority Mail prices increasing an average 3.1 percent and Express Mail prices increasing an average 3.4 percent.

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Priority Mail pricing will offer an average 6.8 percent discount off retail prices for customers using online and other authorized postage payment methods.

This week the Postal Service also introduced a new Express Mail Flat Rate box. Customers can ship the box for overnight delivery anywhere in the country for one price, \$39.95, regardless of weight, up to 70 pounds.

Other Express Mail changes include lower retail prices for half- and one-pound packages and commercial packages to local and close-in areas.

Post Office patrons will now also have the option of renting a post office box for three months, rather than a year. Prices will be adjusted for other shipping services products and services, such as Parcel Select, parcel return service, international mail, Premium Forwarding Service and Post Office Box Service.

This is the first price increase for the stamp since May 2009.