

Stamp prices going up in January, 2012

Stamp prices will go up by 1 cent starting in January, the U.S. Postal Service reported recently.

The cost of a first-class stamp - also known as a Forever Stamp - will climb to 45 cents on Jan. 22, the first price increase in more than 2 1 / 2 years, USPS said. The cost of sending magazines, standard mail and some package services will also rise, but prices for Express Mail and Priority Mail will stay the same.

The price increase is expected to generate an additional \$888 million in revenue, postal officials said Tuesday.

The price jump "is small and is needed to help address our current financial crisis," Postmaster General Patrick R. Donahoe said in a statement, adding that while USPS continues to "aggressively cut costs" it needs Congress to pass postal reform legislation that he said would make it easier to save money.

Starting Jan. 22, 2012, USPS said rates will increase as follows:

- First-class letters (1 oz.): 1-cent increase to 45 cents.
- Letters weighing additional ounces: Unchanged at 20 cents.
- Postcards: A 3-cent increase to 32 cents.
- Letters to Canada or Mexico (1 oz.): A 5-cent increase to 85 cents.
- Letters to other international destinations: A 7-cent increase to \$1.05.

The Postal Service is believed to have lost about \$10 billion in the past fiscal year. It is pushing Congress to enact a series of reforms that would permit USPS to end Saturday mail deliveries, close post offices and mail processing facilities and raise postage rates beyond the rate of inflation.

The price increases are capped by law at 2.1 percent, the rate of inflation based on the Consumer Price Index.