



December 7, 1994

**MANAGERS, DELIVERY PROGRAMS SUPPORT (AREAS)
MANAGERS, OPERATIONS PROGRAMS SUPPORT (DISTRICTS)**

SUBJECT: USPS-Provided Vehicles on Rural Routes

In response to questions about day-to-day procedures for rural routes assigned postal vehicles, the following information is provided. Please share it with affected offices.

Non-Availability of a Postal Vehicle

In the event a postal-provided vehicle is not available for a route to which one is assigned, a rural carrier may be requested, but not required, to provide a vehicle. If a carrier provides a vehicle for any portion of the route, normal daily equipment maintenance allowance (EMA) is payable.

Postmasters and timekeepers must use care when completing Form 1314, Rural Carrier Time Certificate. The "GT Veh" block will generate or withhold EMA payment to regular carriers, depending on whether or not a postal vehicle is formally assigned to the particular route. See Section 570 of Handbook F-21, Time and Attendance, for detailed instructions.

Refueling and Checking Oil and Other Fluids

Rural carriers are required to refuel postal-provided vehicles, using self-service pumps if available. Rural carriers are not required to check oil and other fluid levels. This can be done by another postal employee, or incorporated to local contracts with service stations. Of course, rural carriers must report any observed leaks or operating problems on Form 4565, Vehicle Repair Tag, and should not use the vehicle if damage seems likely or safety is compromised.

Other Use of Rural Vehicles

Vehicles assigned to rural routes may be used for other duties, as long as that usage does not interfere with the rural carrier's completion of the assigned route. This usage should be on an exception or emergency basis, and other users must return the vehicle with a full tank of gas, since the rural refueling standard only covers the rural route needs.

Rotation of Vehicles Assigned to Rural Routes

Postal-provided vehicles, including those assigned to rural routes, may be rotated to minimize accumulated mileage, at the discretion of the Vehicle Maintenance Facility manager.

Parking

Priority parking is given to vehicles required for delivery.

Use of Wheel Chocks

If rural carriers are required to use wheel chocks, an appropriate time allowance for their placement and removal must be granted. Use Form 4003 to increase route base hours for the weekly time required to use wheel chocks, until the duties can be incorporated to mail count data.

Vehicle Modifications

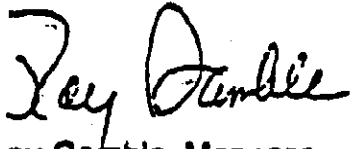
Vehicle Maintenance staff can advise postmasters of authorized modifications or equipment, including those for winter driving, and procedures for installing or obtaining them. Modifications must comply with any specifications issued by Vehicle Maintenance. For example, concrete blocks used as wheel weights must be bolted down to prevent damage in the event of sudden stops.

Cleaning Vehicles

Rural carriers are required to keep vehicles clear of trash, debris, personal items, loose forms, etc., and to remove all mail on completion of delivery duties. Empty equipment must also be removed, unless specifically authorized to be kept in the vehicle. Rural carriers are required to clear ice and snow from the windshield and windows as winter conditions require, and the USPS must provide scrapers. However, rural carriers are not required to wash the vehicle, the windshield or the windows. Contact the Vehicle Maintenance Facility manager for guidance in establishing washing contracts.

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you have questions, please contact Jackie Estes at (202) 268-3543.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jay Dumbie". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

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perations Programs

c: Mr. Dunning, Ms. Wilson