

Business / Agriculture

Mail and snow

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The part about exactly how to keep employees safe seems to be a matter of contention among some Baker City residents.

Recently the postal service delivered notices to some postal customers showing the proper way to clear curbside mailboxes in order to ensure safe delivery.

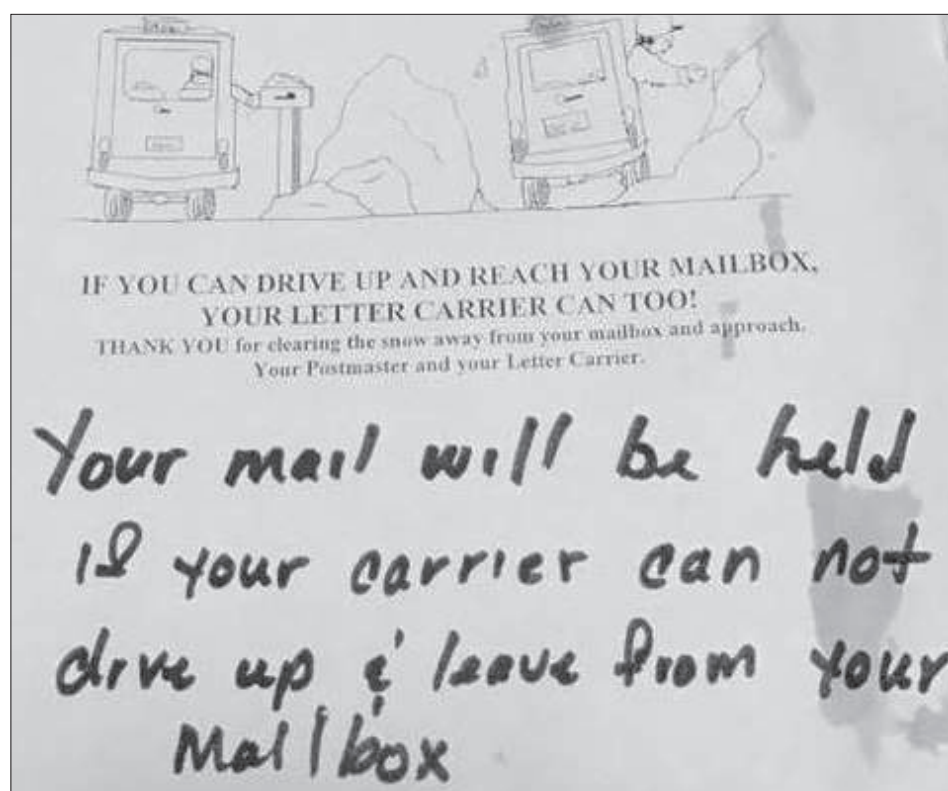
The notices also advise customers that mail would not be delivered, but rather held at the post office until conditions improve and safety can be ensured, of course customers can pick up their mail at the post office as well.

Legler acknowledges that some customers are very upset with that requirement because it is the City's responsibility to plow the roads, but ultimately it is the customer's responsibility to make sure that there is a clear, safe, unobstructed path to and from their mailbox.

He said, "Unfortunately, the customers need to clear out their mailboxes so that the carrier can drive up to the mailbox, deliver the mail and drive away from the mailbox safely. In some cases we've found, an example being Grove Street, there is only one lane on that street in which to drive down and if you drift outside of the lane of travel you sink down into the snow and get stuck."

"Other instances are when the carrier might be able to pull up to the mailbox but when they try to leave they get stuck or they slide into the mailbox and knock the mailbox down. All of those things are the factors as to why some customers might not be getting mail. We just would like the customers to know that yes, it is our job to deliver the mail and we do our best."

But Legler insisted, "The safety of my employees is paramount. Basically the issue is just that it's a bad year this year. Because of the amount of snow that we are getting its very difficult for the City to plow the roads and keep up. Unfortunately, what that means is that people boxes, especially the curb side boxes are getting plowed in and the carriers are having to park their vehicles or stop their vehicles in the roadway, which makes it extremely unsafe."



Submitted Photo.

An example of a letter from the USPS received by a Baker City customer.

"In some cases that means unfortunately we are not to be able to deliver the mail to the customers. Some carriers have even been climbing up the snow berms. We've already had one employee get injured trying to deliver the mail by climbing up a snow berm."

He also noted that with the roads being closed there isn't much mail.

"None of our trucks came in but were still out there delivering what little we have. Letters, local mail we were able to hold back to get delivered and whatever we received yesterday. With the freezing rain and now snow on top the roads are very treacherous. Even chaining up our vehicles on all fours they're still just having a devil of a time trying to get the mail delivered," he said.

He stated that recently carriers have been out as late as 7 or 8 o'clock just trying to get as much of the mail that could possibly get delivered safely.

Legler explained, "This is my first year here in Baker City, in this environment and everybody keeps telling me that this is the worst snow in years. I understand that the City is having problems because they've gone through their budget, I read a headline that in just in the first few weeks of this season they'd gone through that. When I talked to Michelle (Michelle Owen, Baker City Works Director) at the City she indicated that they've exhausted their budget and their contingency. They are out of money."

"There are a couple of streets that have only been plowed once, one of my carriers lives on one of those streets and just yes-

terday we were finally able to deliver his mail.

"Once the vehicles get out of the rut, the drive path, it may look good to the customer but the carrier gets over there and it's anywhere from 6"-12" and they sink in and get their rigs stuck. I've pushed a carriers out, dug carriers out. I've used my personal 4x4 truck to pull stuck rigs out and we've even had to call a tow truck. It's bad out there, crazy, terrible. We are doing our best."

"In many cases we're getting out of our vehicles to deliver the mail even though that's not the proper thing to do. We try to take care of our elderly and any one that has a hardship issue to the best of our abilities. We try to provide the absolute best customer service we can but again, safety is most important."

Legler stated that while most Baker City customers are very friendly and understanding there are a few that just don't understand and think it's everybody's responsibility but theirs to keep a pathway to their mailbox.

He cites a recent article he read where snowy conditions very similar to what this area is experiencing forced a mail truck to park in the road with that carrier getting out of the vehicle. That vehicle was struck causing, the carrier to be pinned between the vehicle and a snow berm, breaking both of his legs.

He said, "I don't want to have to be the one to deliver that news to a family. That I put someone in harm's way and that's why they're not coming home."

He added, "I always tell my employees to be safe and to let me know if there is a safety issue we need

to address. I know that my employees were parking in the road, climbing snow berms, just taking chances and I decided we can't be doing this anymore, risking safety and possibly life just to deliver some mail to a customer."

Legler empathized, "I understand it from the customer's standpoint—most of the customers in Baker City are understanding but those that aren't I ask them to understand, if this was you son or daughter out delivering mail would you want them in these conditions and harm's way?"

Legler cited what were, in his opinion, the worst areas being South Baker, Grove between Campbell and Spring Garden, and the area of Balm and Court. Legler said that his responsibilities include seven City routes, two rural routes including one that delivers to Haines and North Powder and three contract delivery routes that include Sumpter and Granite, Halfway, Richland and Oxbow and Medical Springs and the Sparta area.

Legler, who hails from a much larger, busier area, began here in Baker City as a Delivery Supervisor in May 2016 and recently was promoted to Postmaster.

He said, "One of the things that I love about Baker City is that neighbors help neighbors, that small town atmosphere. I think this is a fantastic community."

He said his "goal is to provide the absolute best, top-notch customer service and be one best post offices in Oregon."

This weather has many discouraged and does cause hardship for nearly all.

— WEEKLY HAY REPORT —

Friday, January 13, 2016 — Eastern Oregon

Prices trended generally steady in a limited test compared to week ago prices. Most demand lays with the retail/stable hay. According to some producers, horse owners prefer lower sugar, higher protein hay. The recent snows slowed movement as trucks can't get to the farms to get loaded.

Tons	Price Range	Wtd Avg
Alfa — Large Square Fair	100 110.00-110.00	110.00
Alfa / Orchard Mix — Small Square Premium	32 185.00-185.00	185.00
Timothy Grass — Small Square Premium	10 200.00-200.00	200.00

USDA Market News Service—AMS.USDA.gov

— CATTLE MARKET REPORT —

Wednesday, January 4, 2017

Vale, Oregon

Cattle sold through the auction: 305
(No new numbers available for last week.)

Steer Calves

300-400#	Bulk	N/A	Top	N/A
400-500#	Bulk	N/A	Top	N/A
500-600#	Bulk	126.00 - 142.00	Top	144.50

Heifer Calves

300-400#	Bulk	N/A	Top	N/A
400-500#	Bulk	122.00 - 133.00	Top	135.00
500-600#	Bulk	117.00 - 129.00	Top	130.00

Yearling Steers

600-700#	Bulk	118.00 - 125.00	Top	126.00
700-800#	Bulk	107.00 - 116.00	Top	117.00
800-900#	Bulk	104.00 - 111.00	Top	112.00
900-1,000#	Bulk	97.00 - 106.00	Top	108.00

Yearling Heifers

600-700#	Bulk	109.00 - 121.00	Top	122.00
700-800#	Bulk	102.00 - 106.00	Top	107.50
800-900#	Bulk	N/A	Top	N/A
900-1,000#	Bulk	N/A	Top	N/A

Thin Shelly Cows	35.00 - 49.00
Butcher Cows	51.00 - 58.00
Butcher Bulls	51.00 - 61.00
Pairs Young	N/A
Hfretts	64.00 - 79.00
Stock Cows Young	865.00 - 1175.00

ProducersLivestock.com
541-473-3136

— LOG PRICE REPORT —

Prices are based on the majority of saw mills in Northeastern Oregon and Central Idaho. The prices listed below are a composite prices of various sawmills willing to visit with me about this topic.

Ponderosa Pine—small diameter class 8-11 inches diameter class \$250 per mbf. Only one sawmill was willing to buy small diameter pine at this time.

Ponderosa Pine—medium diameter class 12-17 inches diameter class \$300 to \$350 per mbf

Ponderosa Pine-large diameter class 18 plus inches diameter class \$380 to \$410 per mbf

The Pine prices are still approximately \$40 per mbf below average lumber/log market due to 2017 fire salvage

Doug Fir & Western Larch—\$380 to \$420 per mbf. Normal prices typically ranged between \$425 to \$475 per mbf.

White Fir-\$300 per mbf. Normal prices typically ranged between \$340 to \$360 per mbf.

Engelmann Spruce—\$350 at one Idaho sawmill, other sawmills including with White fir prices.

In general, the log prices still impacted from 2015 fire season and fire salvage that resulted. Sawmills are starting to get log yard inventory in line with sawmill production needs. With a new Administration as of 1/20/2017, a more normal economic environment should result and hopefully a more healthy housing situation will result in a better climate for Northeast Oregon Sawmill and private forest land-owners.

Courtesy of Arvid Andersen, Andersen Forestry Consulting

— PRECIOUS METALS REPORT —

Price per ounce, USD

Gold: \$1,202.60

Silver: \$17.07

Platinum: \$961.60

Palladium: \$748.50

Bloomberg.com

— AG COMMODITIES —

Corn: \$365.00/bu/USD

Wheat: \$431.00/bu/USD

Soybeans: \$1,075.00/bu/USD

Oats: \$257.00 bu/USD

Rough Rice: \$9.92/cwt/USD

Canola: \$515.30 CAD/mwt

Live Cattle: \$119.40/lb./USD

Feeder Cattle: \$129.55/lb./USD

Lean Hogs: \$68.60/lb./USD

Bloomberg.com

BTI hires new health services instructor

In response to regional training needs and growing enrollment, Baker Technical Institute (BTI) has hired Jacque Cobb as an instructor of the Health Services Department.

Cobb will assist BTI's Health Services Director in expanding course offerings and in establishing future

training needs. Her skills and abilities in program development with an emphasis on efficiency, teams, networking and communication combined with a passion for education are a natural fit with BTI.

Cobb joins BTI with 15 years' experience in the nursing profession working

as a certified nursing assistant and registered nurse. Most recently, she has been working in oncology and family practice. Cobb developed the oncology program in Baker City for Mountain States Tumor Institute and developed the team nursing approach for family practice.

"I am passionate about vocational training and look forward to providing people with the opportunity to develop their skills to their fullest capacity," says Cobb. "I love nursing and enjoy introducing people to the profession."

Business workshops free to the public

Northeast Oregon Economic Development District (NEOEDD) offers a free, seven-week workshop series to help entrepreneurs and small-business owners build the basis for a successful enterprise. Register

by Feb. 13 to reserve your seat in Baker City, La Grande, or Enterprise. But, don't wait—class size is limited!

Workshops take place:

Enterprise: Tuesdays, Feb. 14-28 and Mar. 7-28

from 6 to 9 p.m. at Fish-trap, 400 E Grant St.

Baker City: Wednesdays, Feb. 15-22 and Mar. 1-29 from 6 to 9 p.m. at HatchLab Baker, 2019 Main St.

La Grande: Thursdays,

Feb. 16-23 and Mar. 2-30 from 6 to 9 p.m. at Umpqua Bank, 1215 Adams Ave.

To register, call NEOEDD by Friday, Feb. 10 at 541-426-3598 or 800-645-9454.