



M000 General Preparation Standards

M030 Containers

M031 Labels

Summary M031 describes what should appear on the destination line (Line 1), content line (Line 2), and office of mailing or mailer information line (Line 3), of sack and tray labels. The section covers additional standards for tray, sack, and pallet labels.

1.0 SACK AND TRAY LABELS

Basic Standards Only sack labels may be used for sacks; only tray labels may be used for trays.
 1.1 Machine-printed labels (available from the USPS) ensure legibility. Legible hand-printed labels are acceptable. Illegible labels are not acceptable. Container labels for automation rate mailings are subject to [M032](#).

Line 1 (Destination Line)
 1.2 **[10-30-03]** Line 1 (destination line) must meet these standards:

- a. *Placement.* Line 1 must be the first visible line on the label. It must be completely visible and legible when placed in the label holder. This visibility is ensured if the top of this line is no less than 1/8 (0.125) inch below the top of the label when the label is cut and prepared.
- b. *Information.* Line 1 must contain only the information specified by standard, including the appropriate destination facility prefix (e.g., “ADC”). Two zeros may follow the 3-digit ZIP Code prefix required by labeling standards (e.g., 223 as 22300).
- c. *Overseas Military Mail.* On 5-digit sacks and trays for overseas military destinations, Line 1 shows, from left to right, “APO” or “FPO,” followed by “AE” (for ZIP Codes within the ZIP Code prefix range 090-098), “AA” (for ZIP Codes within the 3-digit ZIP Code prefix 340), or “AP” (for ZIP Codes within the ZIP Code prefix range 962-966), followed by the destination 5-digit ZIP Code of the mail in the sack or tray.

Line 2 (Content Line)
 1.3 **[10-30-03]** Line 2 (content line) must be the second visible line on the label. This line must show the class and processing category of the mail in the sack or tray and other information as specified by standards.

Line 3 (Origin Line)
 1.4 **[10-30-03]** Line 3 (office of mailing or mailer information line) must be the bottom line of required information and must show either the city and state of the entry post office or the mailer’s name and the city and state of the mailer’s location. It is recommended that the mailer’s name also appear with the city and state of the entry post office.

Extraneous Information
 1.5 Extraneous information is not permitted on the destination and content lines. It may be placed away from required lines, subject to these conditions:

- a. It may be placed above Line 1 in not more than 0.083 inch high type (6-point type).
- b. It may appear to the right of required Line 3 information but it must not consist of numerals that resemble a ZIP Code or 3-digit ZIP Code prefix.
- c. It must not appear between Lines 1 and 2 (a blank line is permitted), but may appear between Lines 2 and 3 if it does not consist of numerals that resemble a ZIP Code or 3-digit ZIP Code prefix.
- d. It may appear below Line 3.



- e. A mailer code assigned by the USPS or such words as “Mailer,” “From” (or “FR”), or “Entered at” may appear before the required information on Line 3.

Abbreviations 1.6 Lines 1 and 3 may contain abbreviated information if such abbreviations are those in the USPS City State Product or in Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*.

Periodicals Publications 1.7 Except as provided in M230, for combined mailings, Periodicals publications must use one of the following for Line 2 class information:

- a. “PER.”
- b. “NEWS” if published weekly or more often or if authorized newspaper treatment as of March 1, 1984.

2.0 ADDITIONAL STANDARDS—SACK LABELS

Specifications 2.1 A sack label must meet these specifications:

- a. Color: white or manila for Priority Mail, First-Class Mail, Standard Mail, and Package Services; pink for Periodicals.
- b. Weight: 70-pound or heavier stock (required for mailings of automation-compatible flats, optional for others).
- c. Length (parallel to printing): 3.250 inches minimum; 3.375 inches maximum.
- d. Height (perpendicular to printing): 0.937 inch minimum; 0.980 inch maximum.

Automation-Compatible Flats 2.2

For sack labels used on mailings of automation-compatible flats only.

- a. The human-readable content of sack labels must be machine-printed at five lines per inch. If the information cannot be shortened by postal abbreviations, it may be printed at a pitch of up to 15 characters per inch, if at least 22 human-readable characters fit on the label without interfering with the “quiet zone.”
- b. The minimum acceptable height for the destinating ZIP Code is 0.111 inch (8-point type).
- c. The minimum acceptable character height for all other information on Lines 1, 2, and 3 is 0.083 inch (6-point type).

3.0 ADDITIONAL STANDARDS—TRAY LABELS

Placement 3.1 A tray label must be securely placed in an adhesive-backed label holder that is affixed to the specific location designated on the tray. Where no specific location is indicated the label must be securely placed in an adhesive-backed label holder that is affixed horizontally to the top left corner of one end of the tray. Do not use tape. Insert labels completely into the label holder to ensure that they do not fall out during processing. Do not insert labels upside down.

Specifications 3.2 A tray label must meet these specifications:

- a. Color: white or manila for First-Class Mail and Standard Mail; pink for Periodicals.
- b. Weight: minimum 70-pound stock (500 sheets, 24 by 36 inches).
- c. Height (perpendicular to printing): 1.860 inches minimum; 2.015 inches maximum.
- d. Length (parallel to printing): 3.250 inches minimum; 3.515 inches maximum.
- e. Thickness: 0.005 inch minimum.

4.0 PALLET LABELS

Placement	At least two clearly visible labels must be affixed on two adjacent sides of each pallet.
4.1	
Specifications	Pallet labels must be pink for Periodicals mail or white for Standard Mail and Package Services mail. Pallet labels must measure at least 8 inches by 11 inches.
4.2	
Lettering	Lettering for required information on pallet labels must be at least 1/2 inch high.
4.3	
Required Information	Labels must contain the information required under 4.0 and under M045, M920, M930, or M940 for the preparation method and class and rate claimed.
4.4	
Line 1 (Destination Line)	[10-30-03] Line 1 (destination line) must meet these standards:
4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Placement.</i> Line 1 must be the first visible line on the label. It must be completely visible and legible when placed on the pallet. If the pallet label does not provide enough space for all required Line 1 information, the destination ZIP Code may be placed right-justified on the line immediately below the rest of Line 1 and above Line 2 (content line). A standard abbreviation for the destination city name may be used. b. <i>Information.</i> Line 1 must contain only the information specified by standard, including the appropriate destination facility prefix (e.g., “ADC”). Two zeros may follow the 3-digit ZIP Code prefix required by labeling standards (e.g., 223 as 22300). c. <i>Overseas Military Mail.</i> On 5-digit pallets for overseas military destinations, Line 1 shows, from left to right, “APO” or “FPO,” followed by “AE” (for ZIP Codes within the ZIP Code prefix range 090-098), “AA” (for ZIP Codes within the 3-digit ZIP Code prefix 340), or “AP” (for ZIP Codes within the ZIP Code prefix range 962-966), followed by the destination 5-digit ZIP Code of the mail on the pallet.
Line 2 (Content Line)	[10-30-03] The content line (line 2 of required information) must be the second visible line on the label. This line must show the class and processing category of the mail on the pallet and other information as specified by standard. If the content line of a pallet label does not provide enough space for all required information, the content information may be continued right-justified on the line immediately below the content line and above the office of mailing or mailer information line.
4.6	
Line 3 (Origin Line)	[10-30-03] The office of mailing or mailer information line (line 3 of required information) must be the bottom line of required information and must show either the city and state of the entry post office or the mailer’s name and the city and state of the mailer’s location. It is recommended that the mailer’s name also appear with the city and state of the entry post office.
4.7	
5-Digit, 5-Digit Carrier Routes, and 5-Digit Scheme Carrier Routes Pallets	All 5-digit carrier routes or 5-digit scheme carrier routes pallets must show the words “CARRIER ROUTES” (or “CR-RTS”) after the processing category description on the content line under M045, M920, M930, and M940. 5-digit pallets of Bound Printed Matter that contain only carrier route rate mail also must show the words “CARRIER ROUTES” (or “CR-RTS”) after the “5D” pallet level description on the contents line under M045.
4.8	
Barcoded Status	Pallet labels must indicate whether the mail on the pallet is barcoded, or not barcoded, or both. Specific Line 2 label information is in M045, M920, M930, and M940.
4.9	



Extraneous Information
4.10

Extraneous information is permitted on pallet labels if:

- a. The print size is smaller than a 1/2 inch.
- b. It does not consist of a numbered series resembling a ZIP Code or 3-digit ZIP Code prefix.
- c. It does not appear on or between the lines reserved for USPS required information (blank lines are permitted). Exception: For combined mailings of Standard Mail and Package Services machinable parcels, mailer codes and extraneous information may appear between the content line and the office of mailing or mailer information line.
- d. It is below the office of mailing or mailer information line.
- e. A 1-inch clear space is maintained around the lines reserved for USPS required information.
- f. On the office of mailing or mailer information line, the mailer’s name or abbreviation, “Mailer,” “From” (or “FR”), “Entered at,” or a similar notation precedes the required information, or mailer codes or other extraneous information appear to the right of the required information.

Periodicals Publications
4.11

Except as provided in [M045.8.0](#) for copalletized mailings, Periodicals publications must use one of the following for Line 2 class information:

- a. “PER.”
- b. “NEWS” if published weekly or more often or if authorized newspaper treatment as of March 1, 1984.

Pallet Bundle Information
4.12

It is recommended that mailers preparing bundles on pallets add to the pallet label, below the office of mailing or mailer information line and according to the provisions of [4.10](#), additional information listing the number of bundles for each bundle sortation and rate level on the pallet (i.e., the number of carrier route bundles, the number of 5-digit, 3-digit, and ADC automation rate bundles, and the number of 5-digit, 3-digit, and ADC Presorted rate bundles on each pallet).

5.0 SECOND LINE CODES

The codes shown below must be used as appropriate on Line 2 of sack, tray, and pallet labels.

Content Type	Code
Barcoded	BC
Barcoded and Nonbarcoded	BC/NBC
Carrier Route	C (type of route)
Carrier Routes	CR-RT or CR-RTS
Digit	D
First-Class Mail	FCM
Flats	FLTS
General Delivery Unit	G
Highway Contract Route	H
Irregular Parcels	IRREG (Periodicals, Standard Mail, and Package Services only)
Letters	LTR or LTRS
Machinable	MACH
Manual (cannot be processed on automated equipment or mailer requests manual processing)	MAN or MANUAL
Mixed	MXD
Mixed Machinable and Irregular Parcels	MACH & IRREG (Standard Mail only)



Content Type	Code
Nonmachinable	NON MACH
Nonbarcoded	NON BC (sacks) NBC (pallets and cotrayed or cosacked mail under M910)
Nonmachinable Parcels	NON MACH
Package Services	PSVC
Parcels	PARCELS (First-Class Mail and Package Services only)
Periodicals	PER (see 1.7) NEWS (see 1.7)
Post Office Box Section	B
Rural Route	R
Scheme	SCH (Periodicals, Standard Mail, and (flats only) Bound Printed Matter 5-digit scheme carrier routes sacks and 5-digit scheme pallets only)
Standard Mail	STD
Working	WKG

