



# Branch 2184 ... "Speaks"

Official Publication of Branch 2184, NALC, AFL-CIO

November/December 2013

**Branch 2184**  
**Western Wayne County, MI**  
**National Association**  
**of Letter Carriers**  
**AFL - CIO**  
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**Office Hours:**

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Monday through Friday

**Calendar**

**Branch Meetings:**

January 8th, 2014  
February 5th, 2014  
(7:30 p.m. - Union Hall)

**Retirees Meetings:**

January 15th, 2013  
February 12th, 2013  
(12:30 p.m. - Union Hall)

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## President's Report

### CCA Conversions

Congratulations to our first six Branch 2184 CCAs who were converted on November 2nd. Our newest fulltime carriers are Yolanda Donel, Zia Simmons, Ben Zech, Mark Wagenborg from Taylor; Kris Szubeczak from Trenton; and Sheldon Allison from Inkster. Hopefully this is just the beginning of many more CCA conversions to come.

### Working Safely?

With winter darkness and with later start times becoming the norm, letter carriers will be faced with the personal dilemma of delivering in the dark. While most seasoned carriers know that delivering in darkness can be part of the job, many of our newest members are just finding this out. As such, I asked Injury Comp Officer and Branch Trustee Joe Golonka to update his article *Working In The Dark* and to write about winter weather safety for this newsletter. Joe as always did an excellent job; I hope you find them informative and helpful.

### Happy Holidays!

With the year rapidly coming to a close, I would like to thank the membership for all your help and support. Whether you volunteered for the Branch Picnic, helped us with a MDA event, made a phone call to your representative, marched in a parade, became an E-Activist, signed up for COLCPE, or attended a Branch meeting - thank you. I cannot predict what challenges we will face in the future, but I do know this: if we remain committed to our cause, no challenge or obstacle can stand in our way!

I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year!

-- Mark Judd  
President

### Officers

President .....	Mark Judd
Executive Vice President .....	Jim Wolstencroft
Vice President .....	Walt McGregor
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Trustee .....	Gloria Warthen
Trustee .....	Patricia Linna
Editor .....	Leonard Zawisa
Branch Scribe .....	Joe Golonka
Web Site Design .....	Jim Hales
Injury Compensation .....	Joe Golonka



*Branch 2184 Speaks* is published 6 times a year by Branch 2184, National Association of Letter Carriers.

The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editorial staff or the officers of the branch.

We invite all members to contribute articles for publication. Copy should be typed, double-spaced and signed by the contributor. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit, delete or reject the article for the good of the branch.

In the hope that material contained herein may be of benefit to the goals of the NALC, permission is hereby granted to copy or use material in this publication with our best wishes.

### Stewards

Belleville.....	Lynn Taylor
.....	Gregory Bodziak (alt)
Dearborn (Main) .....	Darryl Clay
.....	Ted Nowc
Dearborn (Annex) .....	Melvin MacDonald
.....	Jacqueline McGregor
.....	Rose Miller (alt)
.....	Tom Klecha (alt)
Dearborn Heights.....	Richard Alaniz
.....	Jim Hales
.....	James Wolstencroft (alt)
.....	John Czuchrak (alt)
.....	Chris Tostige (alt)
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Flat Rock.....	313-295-1640
Grosse Ile .....	Christopher Biegalski
.....	Kim Bumbul (alt)
Inkster .....	James Wolstencroft
.....	Phil Ashford (alt)
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.....	Dave Reise (alt)
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.....	Heather Childers
.....	Bob Venning (alt)
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Temperance.....	313-295-1640
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.....	Gwen Heffinger (alt)
Westland .....	Walter McGregor
.....	Wanda Clark
.....	Kim Clark (alt)
Canton.....	Dianne Campbell
.....	Lois Fritz (alt)
Ypsilanti.....	Mike Tredway
.....	Alan Grajczyk (alt)
.....	Malcolm Muscato (alt)
.....	Paul Bordine (alt)

### Address Correction Requested

When you move, change your name, leave the letter carrier craft, retire, or your phone number changes, we need to hear from you. Your member benefits, newsletter and other mailings may be affected if we don't have the new information. It only takes a phone call or drop us a note. We will do the rest.

**Call 313-295-1640**

# EVP's Report

## Full-time Status

It's been a long time coming, but it is true. There has been a conversion of CCA's into career status in Branch 2184. Not since 2008 has there been a letter carrier hired into career status. Since then we have been patiently waiting for conversions to full time for the PTF's. Since 2008 the district has been under withholding to find positions for employees (clerks) in which their job was eliminated and the carrier craft was greatly affected by this. The conversion of PTF's to full-time status started earlier this year and continues to this day. The branch has only a hand full of PTF's left and it should not be to long before they are converted to full-time status.

So when all the PTF's are converted, this should open up positions for more CCA's to become career letter carriers. Notice I said *should* open up positions for CCA's. That all depends on what kind of legislation comes out of Congress. If the USPS is allowed to go to 5-day delivery mode, that may delay CCA's being hired as career employees. This would be a result of the elimination of approximately 80,000 postal employees. If that were to happen then CCA's might be working as CCA's for some time to come. Let's hope that does not happen.

There is room for your input on this topic and you should do what you can to prevent this from happening. Contact your congressional representative and senator to tell them that you want the USPS to maintain 6-day delivery to save 80,000 jobs from unnecessary cuts to service.

If you haven't notice yet, there seems to be an increase in the number of parcels that we have been delivering this holiday season. That's great news for us. As letter carriers, we should ensure that these deliveries are made correctly and, that if you cannot leave the parcel in a secure place then you should leave a PS Form 3849 for the customer.

And yes, you should scan all parcels that need to be scanned. This is the future of USPS.

I would like to wish all a very happy and safe holiday season.

In Solidarity

-- James Wolstencroft

*Executive Vice President*

## Customer Connect

Congratulation to the following Branch 2184 carriers who turned in customer connect leads which turned into sales.

Ted Gagnon (Westland) \$162,500.00

Michael Chevillot (Westland) \$85,000.00

Paula Hall (Lincoln Park) \$85,000.00

James Bryant III (Dbn Annex) \$26,645.00

Peggy Nolen (Plymouth) \$56,000.00

Ed Sikora (Westland) \$47,847.00

Michael Chevillot (Westland) \$77,792.00

Through Customer Connect, letter carriers are taking advantage of their special relationships to encourage business customers to use USPS instead of private delivery services.

Since the startup in mid-2003, letter carriers have generated more than **1.8 billion** in new revenue.



## Attend Your Branch Meetings

**First Wednesday of the Month**

**7:30 pm @ the Union Hall**

**6969 Monroe**

**Taylor MI. 48180**

# VP's Report

## DON'T FORGET TO SCAN

It's that time of the year again. Just when we've finished Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years are right around the corner. As letter carriers, we deliver so many packages around this time of the year. With today's technology, we are literally scanning almost every package we are delivering. There has been a significant increase in letter carriers receiving bogus discipline (letters of warning) alleging discharge of duties and failure to follow instructions, as it relates to supposedly not scanning the parcel(s). Management will come around with a report and ask you if you scanned a parcel or package. No matter what your answer is, you can count on being called into the office the same day or soon thereafter for an investigative interview. The following day or very soon after that, you will likely be receiving discipline. Just remember to request to see your steward and exercise your right to fight this bogus discipline that almost never meets the "Just Cause" burden of proof required of management.

## CUSTOMER CONNECT

This time of year is a great time to pick up new leads for our employer. Our competitors such as UPS and Fed Ex are delivering packages that *we can deliver cheaper*. So when you see those trucks making the deliveries to homes and businesses on your route, take a moment to get the sender info (company address and phone number) off the package. Give that info to your Customer Connect Coordinator or shop steward; it just may be the next MILLION DOLLAR SALE! Keep in mind that even if your lead doesn't turn into a sale, the fact that you turned in a lead still helps your office in carrier participation and your office may end up having a breakfast on the District in the future. Since the inception of the program in mid-2003, letter carriers have raised \$1,841,306,989 dollars and counting.

## CCAs UNIFORM BANK

Branch 2184 is still collecting old uniforms for our CCA brothers and sisters. If you have uniforms that you would like to donate, please give them to your shop steward or drop them by the Branch office. Thanks to all the retired and active carriers that have donated thus far.

## COLCPE

We are still signing up letter carriers for COLCPE. If you would like to do your part by contributing to our political education fund, see your shop steward for more information or just call the branch office (313-295-1640). An officer will be happy to sign you up.

On behalf of all the officers and stewards of Branch 2184, Happy Holidays to you and your family.

In Unionism,

-- *Walt McGregory*  
*Vice President*

## The Weingarten Declaration

"If the discussion I am being asked to enter could in any way lead to my discipline or termination or impact my personal working conditions, I ask that a union steward, representative or officer be present. Unless I have representation I respectfully choose not to participate in this discussion."

Keep in mind if you do not **REQUEST UNION REPRESENTATION**, then you are considered to have waived this valuable right.

**OUR ADVERTISERS ARE  
YOUR FRIENDS.  
MENTION YOU SAW THEM  
IN OUR NEWSLETTER.**

## OUR ADOPTED FAMILIES FOR CHRISTMAS 2013

The branch was able to adopt four small families this year for Christmas through the Volunteers of America Adopt-a-Family Program. All four families were contacted on 12-10-2013 to inform them they had been adopted and that we had a Meijer's gift certificate here for them. All four families showed up the same day, and I had the great pleasure of meeting all the moms and some of the kids.

All families were very appreciative and asked that I passed on their thanks to the rest of everyone responsible in fulfilling their wishes of giving their children a Merry Christmas.

One mom hugged me about eight times, I'm not exaggerating. She said she does not have any family left to help her and that her work, as an "on-call" Paraprofessional makes it very difficult having a dependable income; she lost her long term assignment in November of this year.

Another mom thanked me over and over, explaining how much the gift would help them; she stated she just found out her 7 year old son was going to need surgery. She said that she was grateful to even be considered for adoption and she hopes "to one day adopt a family in need herself, when she gets back on her feet." Approximately thirty minutes after she left the phone rang at the hall and it was HER mother, crying and calling to say thank you. She said her daughter had called her and told her about being adopted so she wanted to personally call and thank us for her daughter and grandson's sake, and to wish everyone involved a Very Merry Christmas.

Another mom had to be driven here to pick up the gift card because her foot was in a cast. She had recently lost her job "due to organizational restructuring" and lost their apartment and so had to move in with family members. She also thanked us several times during our short conversation.

The final family was very grateful and said that the gift would be a great help this holiday season. She only works part time and is looking for full time work.

I would like to thank the membership for continuing to vote in favor of this program each year and to thank Cindy Trzeciak for starting our participation in this program.

-- Casey Pennington  
Recording Secretary

## Branch Uniform Bank Now Open!

As our new CCA Brothers and Sisters join us as new members, Branch 2184 is asking our retired and active carriers to donate new or used uniforms that they no longer need. If you would like to donate please bring them to the Branch office or give them to your Steward to drop off.

Thank you to Phil Westanen (Taylor), Ranjit Sandhu (Westland), Carol Macieczni (Dearborn Annex), Wanda Clark (Westland), Mary Beth Goia (Westland), Joanne Kastle (Dearborn Heights), Scott Watts (Lincoln Park), Karen Purvis (Lincoln Park) and John McBain (Westland) for their donations.

Lets make our new members feel welcome.  
For more information call -- 313-295-1640

## Branch 2184 Web Site [www.nalc2184.org](http://www.nalc2184.org)

Branch Calendar  
"FMLA" forms  
Carrier Pay Chart  
Online Forms 3971, 3996, 3189

### Steward Resources:

Grievance Forms  
Grievance Guidelines  
2184 Memo of Understanding

## Working In The Dark-- When Customer Service Meets Safety And Common Sense

Every year letter carriers in most parts of our nation must deal with the prospect of performing delivery duties in darkness or near-darkness for several months following the end of daylight savings time. Every year this results in some unique and serious safety concerns. Every year there are seemingly inevitable angst producing clashes between supervisors and letter carriers concerning this issue, and often there are consequent grievances.

Management wants the mail delivered, even while they create customer service problems by scheduling later letter carrier starting times, often due to cut-backs in mail processing facilities. In some instances these problems are further magnified by the understaffing of letter carrier station complements.

Even more problems are created through unrealistic management expectations of letter carrier office and street performance, often based on inaccurate and incomplete computer data. In some offices problems are still further compounded by management's unwillingness to assign overtime work in the contractually prescribed manner. The result of all of this: the earth still rotates, the sun still sets, and letter carriers are still out in the street after dark. Existing delivery hazards are magnified by poor visibility in darkness, and in some areas there also is a serious threat to letter carrier safety due to criminal activity.

When it appears likely that delivery duties will not be completed before darkness sets in, there *should never be* a blanket assumption that all delivery of mail is unsafe and therefore must immediately cease. Conversely, management *should not ever* assume that delivery of mail is safe under these conditions. Safety is first and foremost a matter of judgment and the application of common sense. It is of no value to debate in advance whether a specific delivery circumstance or set of circumstances is or will be unsafe, even when we have every expectation that this will indeed be the case. Your supervisor may have a different expectation and neither is going to change the other's mind. So why quibble about it? The truth will manifest itself soon enough.

If you believe that your assigned delivery duties will take you into darkness and that safety will then be a concern, simply inform your supervisor verbally of this

well in advance (in the morning if possible). Be sure to complete form 3996 as usual when you are unable to perform all assigned duties within eight hours. If a supervisor responds with an unrealistic assessment of your workload, don't argue or debate the issue. Merely respond that you will do the best that you can and reiterate that you have a safety concern about making deliveries in darkness.

Important: DO NOT inform the supervisor at that time that you are *refusing* to work in the dark. Later, when it becomes apparent that your own assessment of your workload was correct, always call in a timely manner (well before the sun sets) to ask for instructions. Once again express your concern about delivering mail in darkness. Follow the instructions you are given, even if they are to continue until all mail is delivered.

When darkness sets in, and you determine after attempting to deliver mail that continuing would be unsafe, again call and inform your supervisor of your concern. Again, follow instructions, even if they are to continue. However, if after attempting delivery one last time your judgment is that it is still unsafe to continue, then (and ONLY then) should you bring the remaining undelivered mail back. Be sure that as soon as you have returned to the office, you immediately inform the supervisor of any undelivered mail. *Always* complete PS form 1571 (report of undelivered mail), listing the reason(s) for non-delivery. Give the completed form to a supervisor and obtain a duplicate copy before clocking out for the day.

Following the above guidelines will help ensure that you are not charged with failure to follow instructions or unauthorized curtailment of mail and possibly receive disciplinary action. USPS customers have the right to expect their mail to be delivered each day. Letter carriers have the right and the duty to perform their duties in a safe manner. It all comes down to common sense and realistic planning. At the end of the work day it also comes down to integrity, and that is where letter carriers should have the advantage, every time.

-- Joe Golonka  
Branch 2184 Trustee

## Letter Carrier Winter Weather Safety

Snow, ice, and cold cause or contribute to hundreds, perhaps even thousands of letter carrier injuries and illnesses each year. The actual number cannot be known because many letter carrier injuries are never reported because of fear and intimidation, or a lack of knowledge. However, the most effective method of preventing any on the job injury always remains the same and that is working safely and under control at all times.

Additionally, many of our City Carrier Assistants (CCAs) are experiencing their first Michigan winter season performing letter carrier work. Veteran letter carriers should make every effort to provide helpful suggestions and assistance to our newest brothers and sisters regarding protective clothing and safe work methods. A review of some practical winter weather safety information for all letter carriers follows.

### COLD

Unlike reptiles, humans are warm-blooded creatures. As a result our bodies must respond to and compensate for significant differences in temperature between our environment and our normal mperature of about 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit. For those working outdoors, wind enhances the chilling effect of cold air by carrying heat and moisture away from our bodies. This effect is typically referred to as the windchill. Windchill also affects animals, but has no effect on inanimate objects such as automobiles. Windchill is not the actual temperature of the air, but rather it is a measure of the effect of the cold air plus the wind on exposed skin.

Snow cover also enhances the effect of cold air because of its high reflectivity. Much of the sunlight that reaches snow covered surfaces is reflected right back into space and is not absorbed by the earth or its atmosphere. As a result the surface air stays colder over snow cover than when the ground is bare. Cold air is also heavier than warm air and has a tendency to sink and pool near the ground.

Since a letter carrier during the winter season typically spends six or seven hours per day exposed to cold and wind, the risk of cold-related injury is significant. The most common and potentially serious cold-related injury incurred by letter carriers is frostbite. Frostbite can occur anywhere on the body, although the

face, hands, and feet are most susceptible. The initial symptoms of frostbite are a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance of the skin on extremities such as fingers, toes, earlobes, or the tip of the nose. If you detect these symptoms, stop and seek medical help immediately.

Continuing to work with the initial symptoms of frostbite may result in serious and permanent tissue damage to the affected areas. Job-related frostbite is a traumatic injury and should be immediately reported on Department of Labor OWCP Form CA-1 when it occurs. Frostbite is also considered a medical emergency requiring prompt treatment. If medical treatment is not immediately available slowly re-warm the affected area, but do not immerse it in hot water. Since there is a loss of feeling with frostbite, burns can result. Frostbite is perhaps the most underreported winter season letter carrier injury, particularly among newer, less experienced letter carriers.

A less common but even more serious condition is hypothermia. Prolonged exposure to cold, wind, and moisture can result in a drop in body temperature that can be dangerous and potentially fatal. If the human body temperature drops below 95 degrees, immediate medical care is necessary. The most common sign of hypothermia is uncontrolled shivering. The importance of protecting yourself by dressing properly before working in the cold cannot be overstated. It is better for a letter carrier to wear several layers of lighter clothing rather one heavy garment, because body heat and warmer air gets trapped between the layers, providing an insulating effect. The layer of clothing that is closest to your skin should be of a light material that will not trap moisture from perspiration next to your skin, but rather allows moisture to pass through the material.

About half of the body's heat loss in cold weather is through the top of the head, so wearing a hat is essential for maintaining body heat. Insulated boots or other protective footwear is important for protection against both cold and moisture. Mittens are better than gloves but are usually not practical for the multiple bundles of mail that letter carriers often must handle.

It is helpful to eat more during periods of intense cold, because the extra calories provide the body with fuel to keep it warm. We burn more calories performing the same task in cold weather than we do when it is warm. It is also helpful to drink plenty of liquids,

*(Continued on page 10)*

# COLCPE Contributors

## Belleville

- ✓ Gregory Bodziak
- ✓ Bruce Prevost
- ✓ Lynn Taylor
- ✓ Cindy Trzeciak (R)

## Dearborn Main

- George Bolash (R)
- ✓ Darryl Clay
- ✓ Wanda Ellison
- ✓ Lisa Franklin
- ✓ Patricia MacDonald
- ✓ Carol Macieczni
- ✓ Ted Nowc
- ✓ Robert Panchenko
- ✓ Dan Smith (R)
- ✓ Ed Waldon
- ✓ Tammy Wheeler
- ✓ Leonard Zawisa (R)
- ✓ Margaret Zywicki (R)

## Dearborn Annex

- Nancy Altman
- ✓ Carl Anderson
- ✓ Timothy Bailey
- ✓ Michael Bergin
- ✓ Peter Borella
- Hubert Brown
- ✓ James Bryant
- ✓ Mark Cornett
- ✓ Sherry Garcia
- ✓ Joe Garcia
- ✓ Mark Judd
- ✓ Thomas Klecha
- ✓ Melvin MacDonald
- William Mather (R)
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- ✓ Rosemary Miller
- ✓ Karen Regentik
- Brian Rodden (R)

✓ Darren Smith

✓ Jerry Taylor

✓ Cathy Tondreau (R)

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- ✓ Rich Alaniz
- ✓ Jim Hales
- James Likeric (R)
- ✓ Ian Mair
- James Powell (R)
- ✓ Richard Ramsey
- ✓ Alan Swintec
- ✓ Christopher Tostige
- ✓ Denise Viola
- ✓ James Wolstencroft

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- ✓ Jerome Mannlein (R)

## Flat Rock

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- ✓ Thomas Harris
- ✓ Virginia McNew
- ✓ Mary Renaud
- ✓ Gloria Warthen

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- ✓ Eric Gant
- ✓ Roy McMahan
- ✓ Calvin Simmons (R)

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- Cecelia Burja
- ✓ Patricia Davis (R)
- ✓ Laura Fitzgerald

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Jennifer Green

✓ Paula Hall

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Dawn Hickman  
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✓ Karen Purvis

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Ruston Shawn

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✓ Scott Watts

Teresa Wisniewski

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- ✓ Casey Pennington
- ✓ Gary Ritchie

## Westland

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- ✓ Bertha Battista
- ✓ Lori Boljesic
- ✓ Veronica Chambers
- ✓ Michael Chevillot
- ✓ Wanda Clark
- ✓ Ted Gagnon
- ✓ Albert Gilliespie
- ✓ Jacinthia Hogans-Bunch
- ✓ Joan Hicks (R)
- ✓ Caprice Hughes
- David Lehman (R)

## COLCPE Contributors

David Marshall

- ✓ Walter McGregory
- John Meleski (R)
- ✓ Ladonna Miller
- ✓ Marie Shannon
- ✓ Edward Sikora
- ✓ Carol Thornton
- ✓ Raymond Tobin
- ✓ Amy Williams
- ✓ Calvin Winbush

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- ✓ Lois Fritz
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- Douglas Koluch (R)
- Gilbert Pruiett

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- ✓ Paul Bordine
- ✓ Timothy Bowsher (R)
- ✓ Alan Grajczyk
- ✓ Willise Jeffery
- ✓ Gene Meadows
- Patricia Neeley
- ✓ Larry Rowland
- ✓ Randall Sano
- ✓ Michael Tredway



Protect your job "Join COLCPE today!"

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- ✓ Check mark indicates you are signed up for automatic COLCPE contributions.

R - Indicates retired members.

Committee On Letter Carriers Political Education (COLCPE)

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(Continued from page 7)

**Weather Safety**

for two reasons. First, sweating often occurs when working in cold weather as the body heats up under layers of protective clothing. Also, cold air is often extremely dry and it draws moisture away from the body. That's why dry and chapped skin is so common during the winter.

**WINTER STORMS**

Although they can be beautiful to observe, winter storms pose a potential risk to everyone. About 70% of winter storm-related deaths and serious injuries occur in automobile accidents. However, virtually all of the rest involve people who are caught out in winter storms without adequate protection or shelter or those such as letter carriers who must be outside in winter storm conditions as a result of job requirements.

Snow is not frozen rain. The term for frozen raindrops is sleet. A snowflake can melt into a raindrop but a raindrop cannot become a snowflake. Snowflakes are formed through an entirely separate process, where particles and crystals of frozen water vapor coalesce when the proper atmospheric conditions of temperature and moisture are present.

Two types of winter storms can affect us in Michigan. Organized areas of low atmospheric pressure can bring general heavy snowfall and other wintry precipitation, particularly when they approach from the south and the west. The heaviest snowfall from such storms is usually about 50 to 150 miles to the left, or to the north and west of the center of the track of the storm. Areas to the south and east of the center of these storms often receive rain or mixed precipitation, and sometimes even wintertime thunderstorms can occur.

Michigan's worst winter storms often form in the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandle area to the lee of the Rocky Mountains, and they tap into moisture flowing north from the Gulf of Mexico as a source of energy. These storms are sometimes referred to as "Texas hookers" or "Oklahoma hookers" because they typically move on a path that hooks to the left, up over the Ohio Valley and the Southern Great Lakes region.

Another frequent source of generally lighter snowfall in the winter season is the so-called "Alberta Clipper" systems that race to the southeast from the Canadian Prairies. Although snowfall from these "Clipper" systems is generally not heavy, they are often quite energetic and are usually accompanied by a lot of wind and followed by very cold air. Letter carriers in



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- Brookfield provides assistance for Conventions, Seminars, and Charity fund raising events!

### **Contact Your Brookfield Representative!**

**Robert Kreager**

Branch 2184 Retired

1802 Ford Blvd. Lincoln Park, MI 48146-3956  
 313-386-0527 (voice) 313-386-3270 (fax)

Western and Northern Michigan must also deal with heavy "lake effect" snowfall resulting from cold air moving over the relatively warmer water of the Great Lakes. Most of the Upper Peninsula, as well as the entire Lake Michigan shoreline and inland for 50 to 100 miles are commonly affected by heavy lake effect snowfall.

Southeast Michigan does receive lake effect snow flurries and snow showers, but accumulations are generally not heavy. Occasionally the Eastern part of Lower Michigan will receive lake effect snow from Lake Huron when the surface wind is from the north or northeast. The shoreline from Alpena to Oscoda and also Michigan's Thumb region is most affected by Lake Huron induced snowfall, but sometimes even Detroit's northeast suburbs can get in on the act, especially St. Clair and Macomb Counties.

Both low pressure induced snowstorms as well as lake effect snowfall are generally well forecast in advance by meteorologists using computer generated numerical forecast models. Hazardous winter weather information is usually widely disseminated by radio and television stations. Average annual winter season snowfall in Michigan ranges from about 40 to 45 inches in the Southeast corner of our State to 100 inches or more annually in some of the snowbelt regions of the Northern and Western Lower Peninsula. In parts of the Upper Peninsula as much as 150 to 200 inches or more may fall during the winter season.

### **OTHER WINTER HAZARDS**

Freezing rain occurs when raindrops fall from warmer air aloft that is above freezing and then reaches the ground where the temperature is below freezing. The liquid water then turns to ice upon contact with the ground, creating very hazardous conditions for letter carriers to walk or drive. Ice storms can also cause major property damage as well as widespread electric power and telephone outages. Freezing rain is most common in the Southern Lower Peninsula and a significant ice storm occurs in Michigan about once every two years.

Sometimes rain that is falling from warmer air aloft will freeze into solid or nearly solid ice pellets before reaching the ground. This is known as sleet and is generally less hazardous than freezing rain, although still a walking and driving hazard for letter carriers.

Sleet is sometimes erroneously referred to as hail, but it is not the same as the true hail that falls from thunderstorm clouds.

### **A PRACTICAL RESPONSE**

Many USPS supervisors unrealistically expect mail delivery to be as efficient in deep snow or icy conditions as it is during warm and dry weather. Computer-generated workload information does not include weather factors, and it is up to the supervisor to make real world considerations about our daily work. There is no reason to get upset when a supervisor fails to realistically assess your work. Don't argue; simply follow the established reporting procedures in the M-41 handbook, and take the time to call if you are subsequently unable to meet unrealistic time expectations.

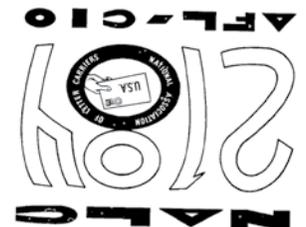
Computer workload data are merely management's estimates. Your actual work as a professional letter carrier is the final determinant of what is real. Always take the necessary time and precautions to avoid injury or illness due to hazardous weather conditions. Overexertion in deep snow and severe cold can be dangerous even for a healthy and well-conditioned person. It is appropriate to list weather conditions on form 3996 as a reason for requesting assistance or overtime when it is clear to you that the weather will be impacting the time needed for street duties. It does not help that letter carriers are routinely instructed to walk across lawns. As a result, in the winter the normal walkway is often covered with snow. Most customers do not shovel their lawns.

If existing or developing weather conditions result in the need for more time than was expected or authorized to complete deliveries, letter carriers should call for instructions. You should NEVER skip any portion of your lunch or break times, or perform their work in a manner that is unsafe for delivery conditions simply to make up time lost because of the weather. Stopping for food provides important fuel and energy for the body's internal warmth, as well as providing a respite from prolonged exposure to harsh conditions. In summary, winter weather brings some unique and difficult hazards for all letter carriers. Management is concerned only with making their "numbers." It is ultimately up to YOU to do whatever is necessary to avoid winter weather-related injuries and illnesses.

-- Joe Golonka (Branch 2184 Trustee)

**T**he Branch 2184 Officers and Stewards would like to extend to you and your families best wishes for a happy and joyous holiday season and a healthy, happy and prosperous new year.

May you enjoy all the blessings of peace and liberty, and the benefits of the special strength that flows from solidarity.



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