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United states postal service mailbox near me

The US Postal Service is testing a “notification” service that emails customers images of the envelopes of their letter-size mail.The service, called Informed Delivery, will send out an email to customers each morning with that day’s mailbox contents. The images are only of the exterior front side, and the mail will not be opened.Informed Delivery has been live in seven Northern Virginia zip codes since 2014 and is now expanding to the New York City metro area, with more coverage planned in 2016. The service is free, but customers have to sign up online. It is not available to businesses and will not apply to packages, though the agency said it may include scans of catalogs and magazines in the future.In 2013, the postal service acknowledged that it photographs every letter and package mailed in the US. The process helps it sort mail, according to the postmaster general. But the USPS has also provided the photos to law-enforcement agencies in criminal cases, including ricin-laced letters sent to US president Barack Obama and Michael Bloomberg, then mayor of New York City. Its mail-tracking program was created after the anthrax attacks in 2001, which killed five people, including two postal workers. Mel is the scribbling Postman from San Diego, who really does enjoy puppies, friendly people, and long walks on the beach.Is UPS Surepost sticker shock ruining your delivery day? Mel Carriere GalleriesCan Big Brown Harpoon Big Blue?I don't think it comes as a major revelation that United Parcel Service (UPS), sometimes known as Big Brown for that strange shade called Pullman Brown that resembles nothing known in nature on this planet, hates the Postal Service and would love to see it driven out of business or privatized. Yeah, the drivers are cool, regular dudes just working for a living, and usually give mailmen a friendly wave when they scoot by in their significantly smaller but equally packed trucks. The real culprits are UPS executives. Big Brown suits pacing the corporate boardroom floors, peglegs clacking like Ahab when he was pursuing the great white whale, wringing their hands, pulling out chunks of their hair as they agonize over the injustice that someone would charge a reasonable price for package delivery, while at the same time scheming up ways to harpoon Postal competition straight down the old blow hole.Sounds like a bunch of hyperbole, but it's not a far cry from the truth. UPS management regularly fights with the Postal Regulatory commission over how the Postal Service sets its price structure, claiming that USPS cost allocation gives it an unfair competitive advantage. On the subject of fair and unfair, we could argue all day with Mr. David Abney, the UPS Chief Exec. We could debate, for instance, whether it is fair that your dear sweet Granny, rocking on the front porch of her farmhouse in the middle of an Iowa cornfield, has to pay UPS a premium to deliver her medicine way out there in the back forty. We could ask Mr. Adley if it is fair that he brings home 13.7 million annually while our own boss, grumpy cat Megan Brennan, only clears about half a million. There are a lot of things fair and unfair we could debate until we all wilt from the rush of hot air blowing back and forth.But debating fairness is not our purpose here. The purpose of this article is to speculate upon what lengths UPS will go to discredit, or dare we say sabotage the Postal Service, perhaps in the hopes of reducing public trust in this time honored, constitutionally mandated institution, with the goal of eventually eliminating it as a competitor.Postal MDD Scanner - Little blue machine infected by Big Brown Gremlins?Postal ReporterBig Brown Saboteurs?The evidence that Pullman-brown-clad saboteurs are afoot doesn't come from secret documents disseminated in boardrooms. For those that deliver mail five days a week, the proof is in the increasingly frustrating scanning frenzy that is daily life. All letter carriers have run across parcels, both large and small, that are difficult or impossible to scan, either forcing them to input the tracking number manually or say screw it, toss the scanner into a dumpster, then go home and drink heavily. A lion's share of these packages have Big Brown fingerprints smudged and smeared all over them. Some of these scans driving mailmen to drink are just random failures with no malicious intent behind them. After all, one would think, the companies that ship products have a vested interest in providing accurate tracking data for their customers, from the first mile dumped out the dock to the last mile sliding smoothly into mailboxes.But many of these package barcode failures occur with such great frequency they must defy laws of randomness, particularly in light of the fact that they pretty much all come from the Post Office's old nemesis, United Parcel Service, the same big brown dogs barking about the unfair competitive advantage enjoyed by USPS.If you are reading this as an American letter carrier you are hopefully aware, unless the noise from your earbuds has completely tuned you out from ugly reality, that every day a UPS driver dumps off a load of parcels on your post office back dock for which the USPS is paid, probably a pittance, to make the last mile delivery on. This service is euphemistically entitled Surepost.This same UPS driver, I have observed, then goes and drops a rather malodorous Big Brown in the postal bathroom, after which he washes his hands, both hygienically for personal sanitation reasons but also symbolically, like Pontius Pilate, absolving himself of further responsibility for the problem he has left, foisted upon you like dysfunctional parents dumping off their sugared up brats with that same rural Iowa Grandma before splitting to the casino. If one of these urchins goes off the rails, it is now up to Granny to deal with it, and let's hope her blood pressure medication with its overpriced shipping cost does not go astray on the way to her back forty paradise, lest those evil little children of the corn make her a human sacrifice.Surely, however—and you say stop calling me Shirley—no matter how desperate our Big Brown toilet warmer is for market share he would never hijack that Sure Post shipment on purpose, with the intention of casting the Postal Service in an unfavorable light? Yet there are reasons that the temptation to do so could exist. Besides the cost savings for UPS that Surepost offers, an added benefit is that if something goes wrong in transit UPS can always blame the post office, particularly if that final, vital stop the clock delivery scan is missing.I have seen more different types of messed up Surepost barcodes than I have bothered to count, to the point where I have placed them into categories, expounded upon below. My research begs the question of what my buddy Bugs alluded to, when reading about the nefarious activities of Gremlins from the Kremlin. Are these Surepost snafus really acts of "diabolikal sabotage," or just innocent mistakes?1. The Wrinkle in TimeAre there actually designated Gremlins in the UPS plant, perhaps low level, management-aspiring flunkies whose marching orders are to mar, wrinkle, or completely cover up a certain percentage of Sure Post barcodes before the packages are dispatched to the Post Office for delivery? if not for the regular appearance of such parcels in the mail flow, along with their relative scarcity from other shipping sources, this proposition would sound as screwy as Holocaust or Sandy Hook denial.So our Big Brown Gremlin, diligently slapping labels on packages for dispatch to the Postal Service, decides to wrinkle a few, just enough to cause mischief but not enough to raise eyebrows. Sometimes he wrinkles the tracking number too, zapping it through some relativistic wormhole into the void of time and space, knowing that even the most determined, diligent carrier will eventually give up trying to guess the missing digits, say screw it, then dump the package on the door and run before the incident goes viral on somebody's You Tube video.Is UPS CEO David Abney the leader of a secret army of Big Brown Gremlins?By Gage Skidmore, CC BY-SA 3.0, . Abney when we fed him after midnight. Our badWikimedia Commons2. The Reach AroundA reach around can be pleasant or not, contingent upon who is doing the reaching and how gentle or rough they are, depending on your kink. For instance, a TSA agent with a rubber glove in full view of passing airport passengers is rarely a pleasant reach around experience, unless you have a touch of the exhibitionist.In Sure Post parlance, a reach around is when a barcode label falls off the edge of the package, then reaches around to another perpendicular face, dropping into doom like Columbus's flat Earth naysayers told him would happen if he sailed too far.As in the previous example, the Reach Around means having to input the tracking number manually. Unlike Joni Mitchell, the scanner cannot look at life from both sides now. Because the lethargic scanner fingers of some jaded letter carriers are worn out from punching numbers all day, they will say screw it, the pox on UPS, and move on sans a scan.What can Big Brown screw for you?scorehl.com3. The Missing in ActionWe all know that deep in the jungles of Indochina there are American POWs still Missing in Action, either held involuntarily for slave labor in the rice paddies, or voluntarily, because they dig Asian babes and are having too much fun to go home,Just last week I discovered something else MIA down there in the Hanoi Hilton, this being a tracking number that was entirely absent from a package. Again, the culprit for this nonappearance was Surepost, whose legions of mischievous Gremlins decided not only to give me an unscannable bar code, but to sequester away the tracking number in some fetid jungle hotbox, negating my ability to make the scan at all.Will UPS be more transparent about its use of Big Brown Gremlins?Minyanville.com4. The Cover UpAre you old enough to remember the Watergate cover up of the 70s? I mention that a lot in my writing because I am still upset that the resulting hearings interrupted my normal schedule of bad sitcom reruns. It seemed like I had to go months without Gilligan's Island.There is a new cover up on our happy little postal desert island. I have dubbed it Surepostgate. This cover up is different from other famous cover ups, because it includes a literal cover up, not just a metaphorical one. Yes, those same grinning Gremlins that go around wrinkling bar codes like they slept in a car in their prom dress, also amuse themselves by covering up bar codes and their associated tracking numbers with stickers.Unlike normal stickers, such as the Dole banana one I apply to my forehead in the supermarket, the stickers of the Big Brown Gremlins have heavy duty, industrial strength adhesive on the back, so strong it can literally lift shipping crates onto cargo ships. The stuff sucks up everything it touches. If you were to be so unwise as to touch the sticky side of one of these death grip stickers it would probably lift your fingerprints off. Peeling one of these stickers off of a bar code takes the tracking number with it.Does anyone even know the devious purpose of the mysterious codes stamped on these stickers? Could it be some secret means of communication that lets the Gremlins know when and where they are going to meet for happy hour after they have utterly ruined another Surepost shipment?When you examine these packages you see that the bar-code-swallowing sticker is very tiny compared to the surface area of the box, kind of like Ireland's size in relation to the rest of the globe. This reinforces the conspiracy sabotage idea, because with all that space available why did they have to put the sticker right over the bleeping bar code?If you wonder why I have an ugly bleeding hole in the middle of my forehead it is because I put a Sure Post instead of a Dole banana sticker there, as a test.Another Surepost barcode stripped away by the crushing grip of Big Brown Gremlin sticker glue.Mel Carriere GalleriesSo What Do You Do With Those Big Brown Floaters in Your Mailbox?Letter Carriers have to deal with the uncertainties of Surepost every day. Certainly they are paid to try to fix UPS mistakes, but as daredevil Evil Knievel thought as his motorcycle plunged full speed into a parked bus, the experience sure can be a "momentum killer."Even though the process sucks for letter carriers, the people who really suffer at the gleefully rubbing hands of the Big Brown Gremlins are UPS customers. Chief Mogwai Mr. Adley has a vendetta with us and, because we fed him after midnight (our bad), he now seeks to sabotage the Postal Service out of existence with his malicious pranks.For Postal customers I can only say be careful. There is nothing sure about Surepost, but you will be charged a Big Brown premium for it anyway, a Big Brown floater bobbing in your mailbox which shows up unannounced one day, with no scanning data to herald its streaky track.Mel's Musical Guest - Beastie Boys SabotageThis article is accurate and true to the best of the author's knowledge. Content is for informational or entertainment purposes only and does not substitute for personal counsel or professional advice in business, financial, legal, or technical matters.CommentsMel Carriere (author) from Snowbound and down in Northern Colorado on November 09, 2018:Thanks Lawrence. Wonderful to hear from you again. I've been working long days and days off so I have been away from the computer a while.Lawrence Hebb from Hamilton, New Zealand on October 22, 2018:MelVery entertaining. Thankfully the three main courier companies here are owned by NZ Post, the only big one not owned by them is DHL and no, the two do not meet!Mel Carriere (author) from Snowbound and down in Northern Colorado on October 08, 2018:Thank you Arthur for reading. Got no problems with UPS drivers. I believe in Gremlins though.Arthur on October 05, 2018:So, I've never read anything else you've written, so I'm not sure exactly how to respond. I'm not sure if you're simply trying to get a laugh, or if you're actually trying to present "facts" in order to sway opinion. But here goes nothing...I just had a long, well-crafted response to your article written, when I realized that you are a postal carrier yourself. Therefor, it saddens me that you've allowed so much guesswork to sway your opinion. And not only YOUR opinion, but the opinion of others, as well. A UPS package car driver barer has enough time to DELIVER all of his packages. Let alone take god-knows-how-long to scuff, bend, tear, or otherwise render unreadable the packages they leave at the post office (for which the post office is compensated fairly—according to the contractual agreement between the two entities. No, folks. Despite what you've read, UPS doesn't just go dump a bunch of packages off forcing USPS to do work they weren't expecting). Also, despite your own apparent animosity toward UPS package car drivers, MOST employees of the two businesses really don't care. We are all just over worked people trying to provide for our family. So please, people...just think about it rationally for longer than 3 seconds and you'll realize that the majority of this article is childish and just plain wrong.foedingle on October 05, 2018:Good day to stop sniffing glue,most if not all carriers have a last mile offering check with Fed Ex they do.Mel Carriere (author) from Snowbound and down in Northern Colorado on October 02, 2018:Thank you John for checking in from down undah after my extended absence. I hope I do not get derailed again as I really enjoy this experience and all the people like you who have been here for years. Your comment is exceptionally flattering and makes me feel good to be back.John Hansen from Queensland Australia on October 01, 2018:Good to see you back, Mel. I found this a fascinating read, especially as your writing style and the touch of humour is so engaging. Even if the topic doesn't directly relate to me I still enjoy it. I look forward to reading more.Mel Carriere (author) from Snowbound and down in Northern Colorado on September 23, 2018:So good to hear from you Linda. I'm delighted so many of my Hub Pages faves are still here after my extended absence.Linda Crampton from British Columbia, Canada on September 23, 2018:It's great to read another article from you, Mel. I'm glad that you've returned. This is a very entertaining article, though I'm sure the real situation is not enjoyable for letter carriers.Mel Carriere (author) from Snowbound and down in Northern Colorado on September 23, 2018:Thank you Mary for reading. That's how they do it, they give you a set of knives but then you have to pay "shipping and handling" on arrival. We honestly don't see too many CODs in the mail flow anymore. Sounds strange.Mary Norton from Ontario, Canada on September 23, 2018:Enjoyed reading this, laughing atsome of your descriptions. I am not aware of this going on but we recently got a package we paid for and it was marked COD. Since our daughter picked it up, she just paid off. We tried to think of why this happened as we ordered the set of knives from The Economist. Oh well, we charged it to experience, not having a clue and we wanted those knives.Mel Carriere (author) from Snowbound and down in Northern Colorado on September 23, 2018:Thank you Jennifer, it is really nice to hear from you and I am glad you appreciate my attempts at humor.I got derailed from Hub Pages for a long time, but I am hoping to get back into the groove. I look forward to interacting with you and all my old friends here again.Jennifer Mgrage from Columbus, Ohio on September 23, 2018:First of all, welcome back, Mel! You cannot imagine my relief at seeing you post again. I was really worried. I am so glad you are still out there, pounding the pavement and spinning your jokes.I laughed many times while reading this post. And, my dad has also been known to stick a banana sticker on his forehead.I did not know that this SurePost thing existed. At first, I had no idea how UPS could possibly be sabotaging the USPS. Then it all became clear.I assume that our packages will not participate in this SurePost thing unless we send the package by UPS in the first place? I usually just go to my local Post Office. And I'm NOT just saying that to make you like me.Mel Carriere (author) from Snowbound and down in Northern Colorado on September 23, 2018:Thank you Bill. I had roadblocks that kind of knocked me off course and although I have been writing, I just haven't done anything on line for a while. I missed this community and, quite frankly, when I saw I had a few hundred dollars in my Pay Pal account after having done nothing for a year and a half I decided it was worthwhile to jump back in. I hope to stick to it. Thanks for dropping in, you're the best!Bill Holland from Olympia, WA on September 23, 2018:Haven't heard from you in quite awhile; it's good to see you haven't lost your writing edge. Laughed all the way through this, my friend. Well done!

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