

Junk Mail

To stop specific types of unwanted paper mail

First class mail: Cross out the address and bar code, circle the first class postage and write "refused: return to sender". Drop in any mail box, it will be returned to the sender.

Bulk mail: The post office throws away bulk mail it can't deliver, so returning it does no good. Bulk mail is the hardest to deal with because the USPS actively provides addresses, support and encouragement to mailers. However, if "address correction requested" is written on the label: circle "address correction requested" and treat like first class mail.

Sexually Oriented Advertising (SOA): The only help you'll get from the Post Office in controlling junk mail is for explicit stuff. Fill out USPS Form 1500 if you wish this type of mail to stop. You define what you find to be explicit -- if that's an automobile parts catalog the post office won't disagree with you.

Credit offers: The major credit agencies all sell aggregate credit information to any bidder. Direct mail and credit companies generate mail based on demographics including zip code, income band and credit payment patterns. Stopping this is easy, you just need your address, former address within two years, and social security number. One call does it all for agencies Equifax, Trans Union, Experian and Innovis.

Dial 1-888-5 OPT OUT (or 1-888-567-8688) 24 hours a day.

Catalogs: Call the company's 800 number and have the label handy.

AOL (America On-Line): You could pave the nation with the free discs these people send out, call 1-800-605-4297 (24 hours a day) to get off the list. Tell them your first name is "current", last name "resident".

Publisher's Clearinghouse Sweepstakes: You can get the Clearinghouse to stop clogging your mailbox by contacting customer service at 1-800-645-9242 (8:30 am to 8:30 EST), sending a fax to 1-800-453-0272, mailing to 101 Channel Drive, Port Washington, NY 11050, or you can send email to pch@ant.net. PCH will remove any number of names from a specific address, but you have to list each name exactly and insist nicely.

LORAIN COUNTY

Solid Waste Management District

A Department of the Lorain County Commissioners

Join us in

"Working together to Help Keep Lorain County Clean & Green"

1-800-449-5463

www.loraincounty.us/solidwaste

American Family Sweepstakes: Ed McMahon and Dick Clark will stop telling you "You have definitely won 11 million dollars (maybe) " if you call them at 1-800-237-2400. AFP is a division of Time-Warner.

Local business & supermarket fliers: All mailings must be identified, by postal regulations. Each lose-leaf bundle of fliers, by postal regulations, must be delivered at the same time as an address card. Locate this address card; the cards usually have an advertisement and a photograph of a missing child. Call directory assistance to get the phone number of the sender, and call to get off the list:

ADVO: (Mail comes with pictures of missing children). Call **1-860-285-6100** to get off the list. You may have to send a postcard to "ADVO Consumer Assistance, POB 249, Windsor CT 06095-4176".

Bulk mail for "current resident or ...": Start with sending a postcard or letter to *Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, PO Box 643, Carmel, NY 15012-0643* Write "please activate the mail preference service", and include the name, address, and zip code. You must send individual postcards -- the DMA wants to make this all as inconvenient as possible. The DMA will ignore requests that don't appear to be from a single individual.

First class and some bulk mail: If the former residents neglected to fill out a Post Office change of address card, or it expired, you can fill one out for them. You must fill out one card for each unique last name. Write "Moved, Left No Forwarding Address" as the new address. Sign your own name and write "Form filled in by current resident of the house, [Your Name], agent for the above". You must write "agent for the above". Hand this form directly to your carrier, if possible, as your carrier must approve the form and see that it gets entered into the post service National Change of Address (NCOA) database. This is *very effective*.

Too much junk to deal with individually: Start by sending a postcard or letter to *Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, PO Box 643, Carmel, NY 15012-0643* Include your complete name, address, zip code and a request to "activate the preference service". For up to five years, this will stop mail from all member organizations that you have not specifically ordered products from. The Direct Marketing Association estimates that listing with their mail preference service will stop 75% of all national mailings. They process 50,000 requests a month and requests are kept active for five years. If you fill out the post office change of address form, the DMA will track the new address (you'll get a few months of mailings to the new address before they catch up to you). It can take up to six months for your request to be fully processed. You can also opt-out online, but they charge \$5. The best way is to fill out their online form, then mail them a printout.