

New features of the mobile delivery device



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Since the mobile delivery device (MDD) was first deployed in the summer of 2014, NALC and the Postal Service have constantly searched for and explored ways to utilize this new technology to improve our jobs and to better serve our customers.

In today's world, our customers demand and expect to know where their packages are from the time they order them, or mail them, until the time they are delivered. The capabilities of the MDD have given the Postal Service the ability to give our customers this increased visibility, which increases customer satisfaction.

Letter carriers take great pride in performing their jobs. One way we do this is ensuring customers' packages are delivered to a place that is safeguarded from the elements, from being stolen, etc. Sometimes that place is not near the customer's mailbox or even near their front door. That safe place may be at the back door, the side door, the garage, or even with a trusted neighbor. In an effort to keep customers notified of where they can retrieve their packages upon returning home, such locations were added to the MDD as options for letter carriers to use to indicate where packages were safely left. When tracking their packages, customers can now see where their packages were left.

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A recent addition to the MDD that may not be as well-known as those described above is the ability to display Amber Alerts across the screen. Letter carriers have always valued their role in assisting the communities in which they work. From rescuing people from burning houses and wrecked vehicles to helping lost children find their way home, letter carriers have always been ready and willing to lend a helping hand. Letter carriers throughout the years have saved and changed countless lives while performing their daily duties serving the public, and now having the

ability to assist in rescuing abducted children can be added to that extensive list of public service activities.

The MDD displays Amber Alerts to letter carriers who are working in the particular ZIP code where the alert would be most beneficial to help find a missing child. A warning comes across the MDD screen stating an Amber Alert has been issued in the area where the letter carrier is working. At that point, letter carriers can view the details of the Amber Alert, including the time and place the child was taken, a photograph and physical description of the abducted child, a picture and description of any potential suspects who may be involved, as well as a description of any vehicle that may have been used in the abduction. Letter carriers can ultimately report via text message to their supervisor any information they may have about the situation, and the MDD will also instruct those letter carriers to call 911 to report their information. This recent feature is just one more way letter carriers can help the American public.

An upcoming feature of the MDD is one that will certainly be of great benefit to the safety and health of all letter carriers. Beginning this month, the MDD will have the ability to notify letter carriers of any hazardous situations that may be along a route they are delivering. What will be referred to as MDD Delivery Alert and MDD Animal Alert will allow letter carriers to input any known hazardous situations along their routes into the Regional Intelligent Mail Server (RIMS) so replacement carriers can be warned of those hazardous situations.

Initially, letter carriers can give their supervisors information about hazards, such as dogs, road hazards and poor lighting situations, for any address on their routes. Their supervisor will then input that information into the RIMS database, which will then relay that information to the letter carriers' MDDs. Whenever a letter carrier approaches an address that has been input as having a particular hazardous situation, they will receive an alert on their MDD notifying them of the type of hazard, the address where the hazard is, and any additional information to assist them in avoiding the dangerous situation. Letter carriers will be able to enter this information and additional hazards directly into their scanners as well. This new feature will assist in ensuring the safety of all letter carriers throughout the country.

As you can see, the MDD and the technology it uses can be used in many different ways as a benefit to letter carriers and to our customers. NALC will continue to work with the Postal Service to explore additional ways the MDD can further be utilized to assist letter carriers, our customers and the American public.