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USPS To Close Regional Postal Centers

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USPS To Close Regional Postal Centers

*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

The U.S. Postal Service on Thursday confirmed what has been speculated and expected: the centers in Cape Girardeau and Springfield will be closing.

USPS announced it would be closing two processing and distribution centers in Missouri, consolidating the work into two major metropolitan centers in the state. Centers in Cape Girardeau and Springfield will be consolidated in the St. Louis and Kansas City operations.

“In a move to help ensure the future of the nation’s mail system, while adapting to America’s changing mailing trends, the U.S. Postal Service today announced that the Area Mail Processing consolidation studies that began more than five months ago have been completed,” the USPS said in a news release. “These changes are a necessary part of a larger comprehensive plan developed by the Postal Service to reduce operating costs by \$20 billion by 2015 and return the organization to profitability.”

Spokesman Richard Watkins in the USPS Regional Office in Kansas City reported that the Springfield closing would mean a loss of 65 positions and the Cape Girardeau closing 71 positions; some transfer opportunities for employees will be available.

No date had been set for the consolidations, but Watkins said they would not take effect before May 15.

The news from USPS was not welcome news in the office of Southern Missouri's representative in the U.S. Congress. U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson said today that she is "incredibly disappointed" in the decision to close the two centers. Both closings will have an impact in her Congressional district. The Cape Girardeau center is in her district, and while the Springfield center in Green County is not in the Eighth District, it borders Emerson's district.

"I'm incredibly disappointed not only with this decision, but also in the way it was communicated to the communities that rely on these facilities for the timely delivery of the mail they entrust to the USPS," Emerson said. "I understand the financial challenges facing the Postal Service, but I do not accept that the way to meet these challenges is to eliminate valued facilities, reduce service and reliability, and slow the delivery of mail. It's absolutely counter-intuitive."

Emerson pointed out that mail in the area will now require a minimum of two days for local deliver, because the ail has to travel 100 miles to be sorted.

"While the USPS should be focused on eliminating redundancies and management overlap, it is instead getting rid of the postal employees who work closest to their customers. I'm frustrated and disappointed in this decision. The Postal Service acts as though it doesn't trust its own employees and it doesn't care about its customers, and they are never going to stop losing money with a mind-set like that."

Photo Above: With the closure of the postal processing center in Cape Girardeau, even local mail sent from the local Post Office in Dexter is estimated to take at least two days for local delivery. Mail from Dexter and Southeast Missouri will first have to be sent to the St. Louis processing center before coming delivery. (SMT photo by Annabeth Miller)

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