USPS Policy Change on Postmarks May Affect Timely Tax Payments

The City of Merrill is encouraging residents who pay their property taxes by mail to be aware of a recent U.S. Postal Service policy change that may affect when envelopes receive a postmark.

In August 2025, the Postal Service implemented a nationwide change to when postmarks are applied. Instead of being stamped when the item is first handled by the Postal Service, postmarks are now applied at regional sorting centers. **As a result, the postmark may be dated several days after you place your payment in a mailbox.**

Because many federal and state laws determine timely payment based on the USPS postmark date, a delayed postmark may cause a payment to be considered delinquent—even if it was placed in the mail before the deadline. To avoid this issue, **we strongly encourage taxpayers to mail their property tax payments early to prevent late fees.**

We also caution residents about using their personal bank's online bill-pay service for tax payments. These payments are often sent in bulk, and the envelopes may not receive an individual USPS postmark. This increases the risk of the payment arriving late and being marked delinquent.

As an alternative, taxpayers may choose to bring their payment directly to the post office and request that it be postmarked in their presence, or send the payment via certified mail.