

TECHNOLOGY IN OUR LIVES

New Meters Let Consumers Dial Up Postage

(NAPSA)—One of the oldest forms of communication—the mail—is making use of the latest technology to save consumers time and money.

The U.S. Postal Service has put its stamp of approval on a plan that will allow businesses to remotely reset their postage meters using phone lines or the Internet.

Under a plan that was set in motion in 1995, the Postal Service is gradually retiring all manually reset postage meters.

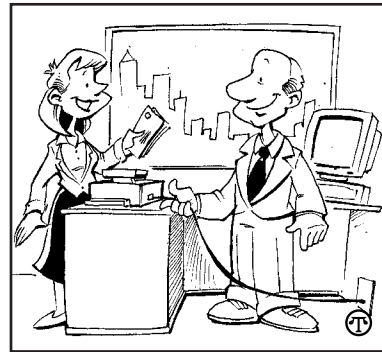
It is believed upgrading to remote set meters will save businesses time, since employees can stay on the job rather than heading off to the post office to have a meter reset.

This new technology will also help businesses manage their accounts more efficiently. Businesses can set up payment plans tailored to fit a company's business cycles. And, remote set meters make postage available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week depending on the manufacturer's plan selected.

Consumers will have at least three months from the time the lease on their meter expires to replace their manually reset meter with a meter that is set over a phone line.

Four companies will provide the new meters: Ascom Hasler, Neopost, Pitney Bowes and Francotyp-Postalia.

The program, called Postage Now, also offers several new pay-



The Postal Service has a new program that lets companies reset a postage meter without taking it to the post office.

ment options, designed to save time and increase efficiency. Consumers can sign up for ACH Debit, which sets up a direct debit to a bank account and immediate access to postage. This transfer takes effect the same business day.

Another option, called ACH Credit, lets the consumer's bank credit a postal account from the bank account of the consumer's choice. This transaction takes place in a single business day.

The third option, called Federal Wire, sends the money directly from the consumer's bank to a postage account. This can be done in two to three hours.

To learn more about how to save your business time and money, visit the Web site at www.usps.com.