

Who Pays When a Vehicle Damages Your Building?

Damage to post office buildings happens every day. Damage can be caused by neglect, by normal wear and tear, by postal customers driving into the building, or by the acts of USPS employees, agents or contractors.

When damage occurs, the most common question from lessors is: “Who needs to pay?” Payment for repair of damage caused by the USPS or by its agent(s) is the responsibility of the USPS. Payment for repair of damage caused by independent contractors is the responsibility of the independent contractor or the motorist. Similarly, damage caused by postal customers is the responsibility of the customer or their insurance carrier.

The damage most frequently caused by independent contractors happens around the loading dock. The awnings and bumpers and even the scissor lifts get hit by trucks delivering mail. In locations where a single contractor delivers all of the mail, getting the contractor to file a claim with their insurance company is more straight-forward than in locations where several contractors make deliveries. ***AUSPL lessors need to give written notice to their postmasters that the landlord is to be notified in the event of any contract carrier damage. USPS personnel need to get the name, insurance carrier and driver’s license information for any driver causing damage to the post office building.***

Once the repairs are made, photographs showing the repairs need to be taken and dated. Regular inspections of the building and a good working relationship with the postmaster will go a long way toward making sure the Landlord doesn’t end up paying for damage which is properly someone else’s responsibility.

