

Package delivery pileups: What you can do about it

Are you one of the hundreds of commercial residential properties nationwide feeling the effects of the meteoric rise in online shopping and parcel delivery? What are you doing about it? Some in the multiunit living industry have simply stopped taking packages! Others are trying to find some middle ground that minimizes hardship on residents and employees alike.

Heavy online shopping is creating mountains of packages in apartment buildings nationwide. Strategies for handling deliveries are challenging property managers and apartment owners regarding both storage capacity and liability for the contents.

With holidays approaching, apartment and condo managers could be feeling boxed in and plowed under. Online sales in the U.S. are expected to hit \$334 billion this year, according to Forrester Research, and that number is projected to continue rising.

Owners and apartment building managers have become receiving centers that must record packages, store them and get tenants to pick them up, *The Wall Street Journal* says in a [recent report](#). Camden Property Trust, which this year stopped accepting parcels at its properties, estimates it takes about 10 minutes to deal with each package. That can turn into substantial pay hours going to a single service that might not be generating a commensurate return on investment.

Some property managers are setting up coded-access locker rooms for parcels, while others get waivers allowing them to enter units to drop off parcels. Removing the apartment staff from being middlemen in the transfer of the packages is the goal, according to one East Coast property management firm. But employee welfare is also a concern, with some managers setting height and weight restrictions on parcels they are willing to handle.

Refusing parcel deliveries is a direction some don't want to go, but concerns about volume, liability and employee injuries from package handling may push apartment building owners and property management companies to restrict service. That isn't sitting well with residents, however. The key is to find a workable solution that doesn't burden employees, doesn't expose parcels to theft or damage, doesn't create hardships for residents and doesn't leave a pile of unclaimed packages in storage in the building.

If you have adopted a parcel-delivery program that minimizes employee-injury and maximizes your return on investment (of pay dedicated to handling packages), you might be able to use that as a differentiating factor amidst the competition. Though one tenant told the *Journal* he equates package receipt to maintenance, emphasizing to residents and prospective tenants the true value-add of this service as an amenity could be an important addition to your marketing. And don't forget to discuss the topic with your insurance agent since you might have some level of liability for costs associated with parcel damage or loss.

Posted by [Global Administrator](#) on 11/10/2015 8:33:25 AM