

# Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

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## “Santa’s Helpers at Norfolk Airport Six Days a Week”

Santa needs a little help this time of year and the Norfolk Regional Airport is more than willing to oblige. Six days a week, at least one plane stops at the airport so workers can unload stacks of packages into UPS trucks- packages destined for homes and businesses all around the Norfolk area.



Mike Pflueger with Norfolk UPS unloads packages from a plane recently. At least one plane drops off a load of packages in Norfolk six days a week for UPS delivery.

According to Ameriflight Operations Manager and Assistant Chief Pilot Nic Rotschafer, the planes deliver UPS packages to Norfolk year around but will need to deliver up to 25% more this month than what they usually do.

"If the plane doesn't bring in the packages, UPS staff would have to drive to Omaha which means the Norfolk office would have to close early. We can make sure those last minute Christmas gifts are delivered on time," Rotschafer said.

Ameriflight is the largest on demand feeder air cargo company in the world, taking packages from large city to large city that may include an overnight package to Alaska from Florida. Nebraska destined packages arrive on an Omaha jet daily and then are loaded onto four or five aircraft that will take trips to Norfolk, Kearney, Grand Island and North Platte. The Norfolk plane arrives at Norfolk Regional Airport/Karl Stefan Memorial Field usually between 7 and 8:00 am Tuesday through Saturday carrying about 1500 pounds of packages. The

plane will drop 75% of its cargo off in Norfolk before heading to O'Neill to deliver the rest. Every Monday through Friday night, another plane stops at the two airports to pick up the outgoing UPS packages.

"Weather is always a factor. If there's low visibility, low clouds or in any way it's not safe to fly, our planes won't leave Omaha. We're usually able to get to Norfolk though," Rotschafer said.

The twin turbine Beechcraft 99 has no seats, one pilot and cargo space in the bottom of the aircraft, the back and even the nose. Rotschafer said pilots like to land into Norfolk for two reasons - the cheapest airplane fuel in Nebraska and excellent navigational equipment that allows them to get in the airport even in bad weather.

So even without Rudolph to guide them, pilots should be able to deliver gifts to the Norfolk Airport without a hitch this Christmas season.