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BUSINESS



Walmart kicks off grocery service

The Lodi Walmart is launching an in-store grocery pick-up service for online orders. **S**

Walmart Supercenter begins pick-up service in Lodi

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In an effort to make shopping more convenient, the Walmart Supercenter in Lodi launched its grocery pick-up service Tuesday.

According to assistant manager Mohammad Rehman, customers can go to www.walmart.com/groceries and register with the site. Once the customer is registered they can pick the Walmart location they'd like to shop from and begin shopping from several shopping categories. A majority of the items available in the store are available online. If a customer's desired item is out of stock but it is available in another brand or size then Walmart will give it to the customer at the same price as the brand or size they wanted.

"My goal is to fulfill the order 100 percent," Rehman said. "Yesterday I had a customer who ordered a half of a pie. I didn't have the pie in stock so I gave her a whole pie."

After selecting their groceries customers can choose from one of the available time slots to pick up their items. Time slots for picking up orders are from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Orders made before 10:30 a.m. can be picked up the same day. Orders made after that can be picked up the next day. Orders can be made up to three weeks in advance.

There is no fee for the service, but customers must order a minimum of \$30 in order to use it. First-time customers receive a goodie bag with all types of treats, and if they spend at least \$50 on their purchase they will receive \$10 off of their next purchase. Free toys or dog biscuits are included with each order if the customer has children or dogs.

Employees put together eight orders at a time and the orders are generated on a hand-held device that they use when putting the orders together.

Rehman estimated that they will be able to fulfill up to 300 orders a day.

Walmart employees said that the services will be very beneficial for the citizens of Lodi making shopping quick and easy.

"It helps the moms who don't have time to go grocery shopping and stand in these long lines. It saves 40 minutes to an hour of their time they could be doing something else," Rehman said.

Department manager Theresa Zardo recalled a mom who used the pick-up service and was extremely grateful that she didn't have to deal with having her kids in the store fighting over which chips to buy.

"She was so happy," Zardo said.

Employee Angie Garcia, who is a "shopper" for the pick-up service, said the service is great for senior citizens too.

"For senior citizens who aren't able to go out of the house for whatever health reasons, they can always go online and have a family member come and pick up the order for them," Garcia said.

She said the service would benefit child care centers as well.

"If you have a child that's in college in another state you can put in the store number closest to them and you can order from your home here in Lodi and they can pick it up," employee Tim Moore said.