

Town of Mt Pleasant-Green County
Mailbox Policy Resolution

It is the Town's policy that mailboxes damaged in the course of snow removal will not be replaced at the Town's expense. Mailboxes are placed in the road right-of-way and are the property of the residents. Residents are responsible for maintenance and repair of their mailbox.

Attached are guidelines the Town supports for mailbox construction.

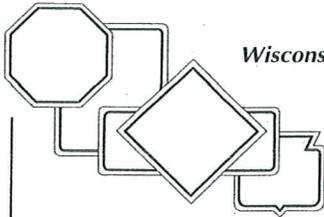
Adopted this 18 day of January, 2010.

Sally Roe signed,
Town Board Chairman

Mike J. Long signed,
1st Town Supervisor

Jeff Glassy signed,
2nd Town Supervisor

Susan Wethy Jr attested,
Town Clerk



Mailbox Safety

There are 30 to 35 million rural and suburban mailboxes in this country. These mailboxes must accommodate both the owner and the mail carrier. However, safety considerations are often overlooked. This bulletin describes improper and unsafe mailbox installation and discusses proper installation and siting. At the end is a list of points to be covered in a local mailbox ordinance.

Although crash reports related to mailboxes are sketchy, the limited data available suggests that 70 to 100 highway deaths in the U.S. each year could be attributed to mailboxes. This data relates the construction of the mailbox system, and especially its support, to the severity of the accident.

The Department of Transportation Division of Highways surveyed mailbox-related crashes in Wisconsin. In 1987 alone, there were over 1700 crashes involving mailboxes that resulted in 144 injuries and two deaths. Improper support systems, such as milk canisters or barrels filled with concrete, were most significant in crashes where there were injuries. Improper placement was most significant in non-injury crashes.

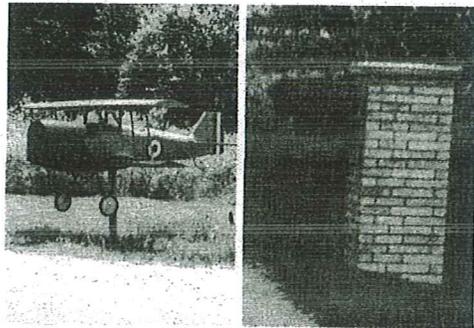
Weak attachments between box and post are another hazard. These may permit the box to penetrate the car's passenger compartment. Multiple mailboxes on a single support, or placed too close together, can also be hazards.

Hazardous mailbox installations

Most curb or roadside mailboxes are relatively simple and unlikely to pose a serious crash threat to vehicles. These are relatively lightly constructed on supports which will easily break off, posing little harm to the vehicle. What threat they may pose is from the box parting from the post and entering the passenger compartment.

The U.S. Postal Service has some requirements for the mailbox and its height, but does not regulate installa-

tion. It approves only certain types of boxes and requires that they be installed with the box bottom 42 inches to 48 inches above the ground. Local postal representatives will review the box location for carrier access and safety and will make verbal recommendations. They have not become involved in structure and installation of the box. Thus the nation's highways are lined with multitudes of installations, some of which are highly hazardous obstacles.



Heavy ornamental mailbox installations may be roadside hazards.

It is the heavy, ornamental or multiple installations that can be lethal roadside obstacles. Masonry installations, large receptacles filled with sand or concrete, metal posts larger than 1 1/2 inches inside diameter, and wood posts larger than a nominal 4 inches square or 4 inches diameter, are a hazard.

Such ornamental mailboxes as old plows, wagon wheels, and comic installations such as "air mail delivery" (a non-functional box on an extra high post) are hazards or obstacles. More than two boxes mounted on a single support, or installed too close together, can be hazardous even if supports are light-weight. Crash



tests show that when more than two mailboxes are mounted together, some of the boxes can penetrate the passenger compartment. The use of a plank to mount several mailboxes is especially hazardous.

Guidelines for safe installation

It is best to keep the entire mailbox installation as light weight as possible. This permits a vehicle crashing into it to break off the mailbox with less damage to the vehicle. The heavier the installation, the less likely it will move instantaneously, causing more damage to the vehicle and injury to its occupants.

For safer mailboxes, follow four basic guidelines:

- Use support posts which will easily break off or move out of the way.
- Mount no more than two mailboxes on one support post.
- Attach the mailbox firmly to the support post using adequately strong bolts and plates.
- Consider roadside conditions in selecting a site.

Supports

The Postal Service requires that the bottom of the box be 42 to 48 inches above ground level. The following are recommended standards for supports which ensure that they will break away on impact:

- Pipes should be 1 1/2 inch inside diameter or less.
- Square wood supports should not be larger than 4 inches by 4 inches nominal. Round wood posts should not be larger than 4 inches in diameter.
- Metal channel posts should not weigh more than 2 pounds per foot.
- Imbed supports no more than 24 inches into the ground and do not imbed them in concrete.
- Do not use anchor plates with metal posts. Anti-twist flanges are acceptable as long as they do not project more than 10 inches into the ground. These should be attached to the metal post or pipe with 2 3/8 inch (nominal) muffler clamps. The Federal Highway Administration has published *Accepted Safety Hardware*. For more information contact the State Division Office of the Federal Highway Administration.

Multiple installations

Mount no more than two mailboxes on a single support. Separate the supports a distance apart which equals three-quarters of the height of the post above ground (Figure 1). Thus boxes mounted four feet above ground should be at least three feet apart (post center to post

center). Figure 2 shows an alternate type multiple box system.

Support construction

Use U.S. Postal Service approved mailboxes. The AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) publication, *A Guide for Erecting Mailboxes on Highways*, contains detailed plans for mailbox assemblies and location. Insuring a firm mailbox-to-post attachment is one of the most important safety considerations.

Figures 3 and 4 show examples of a cantilever mailbox installation. While the cantilever design is helpful to snow removal operations it may cause the mailbox to impact a vehicle at the windshield. Raising the support arm height and firmly suspending the box below may be another way to lessen the windshield damage.

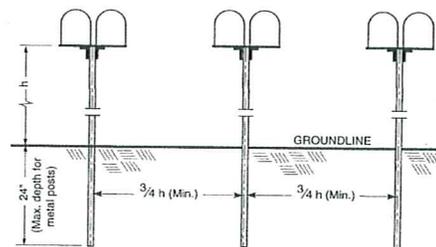


Figure 1: Spacing for multiple post installations

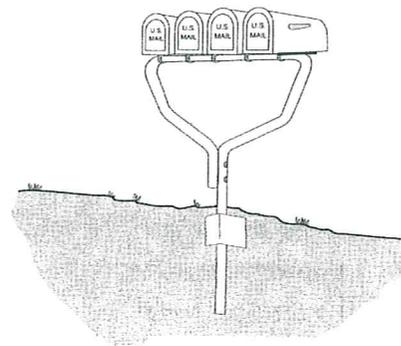


Figure 2: Suggested multiple box support system



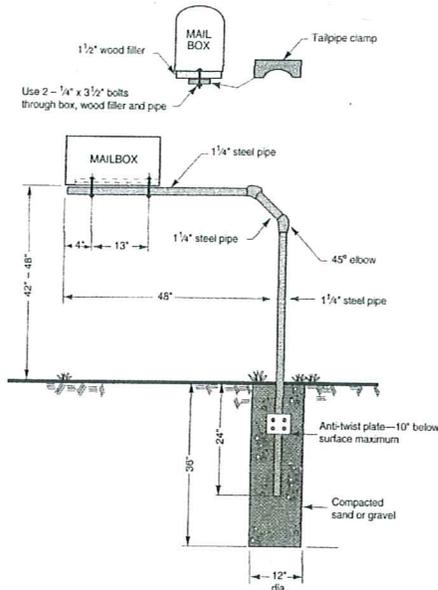


Figure 3: Example of a steel pipe cantilever mailbox support

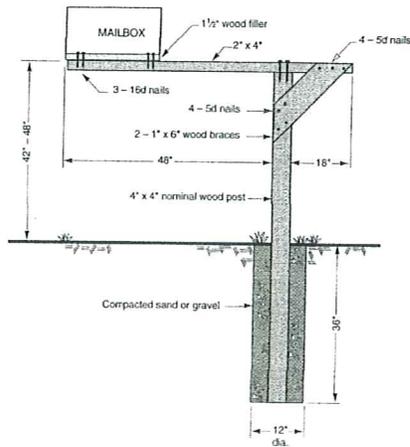


Figure 4: Example of a wood cantilever mailbox support

Siting mailboxes

In Wisconsin snow removal operations frequently conflict with mailboxes. Several local agencies have developed a standard for mailbox installations which has been successful in reducing the number of mailboxes damaged or demolished by snow plows. The standard is published in local papers (Figure 5).

They recommend placing the box on a 24-inch minimum arm, at a minimum height of 46 inches. The front of the box should be aligned with the outside edge of the shoulder.

Locating mailboxes along the roadside is complicated by many factors other than snow removal. These require balancing the maximum convenience to the patron with safety considerations for highway traffic, and with postal carrier convenience and safety. You must also take into account existing roadside conditions such as proximity to intersections; blind spots caused by curves, hills and vegetation; and utility poles, guardrails, nearby bridges, and other physical installations.

NOTICE

Recommended Mailbox Installations

To avoid damage to your mailbox and also allow the snowplows to remove the snow from under your mailbox, the following dimensions are recommended.

Placing mailboxes a short distance away from driveways and intersections helps to avoid vision-restricting snowbanks and also damage to your mailbox. The box and base should be strong enough to withstand flying snow and slush from traffic and snowplows.

By order of the _____
and with the approval of the U.S. Postal Service.

_____ Highway Commissioner
_____ Postmaster

Figure 5: Sample mailbox notice

