

Policy on Installation, Replacement, and Maintenance of Mailbox Supports

It is the goal of the City of Rockville to provide public rights of way for the traveling public that are safe, efficient, and are free of unnecessary hazards, while providing minimum inconvenience to property owners. Minnesota law declares certain mailbox installations to be a public nuisance, a road hazard, and a danger to the health and safety of the traveling public (Minnesota Rules Chapter 8818), and authorizes a road authority to remove and replace such a support (Statute 169.072).

In addition to these requirements, when there is an accumulation of snow, the location of mailboxes close to the City right of way makes the plowing operations of the City difficult and renders the boxes susceptible to damage. Items attached below the mailbox interfere with the plow's wing blade. It is the City's policy to use special care and consideration when plowing snow in the vicinity of mailbox supports. Despite this care and consideration, some mailboxes will be damaged or destroyed during the snow removal season. In the vast majority of cases it is the weight of the snow coming off the plow or wing blade, which destroys a mailbox. On occasion, however, wings will hit and damage them, especially when oncoming traffic makes it impossible for the plow operator to swerve around the support.

We believe most of the mailbox damage that occurs during a typical winter would be eliminated if postal patrons would install a mailbox support that swings away when hit by snow or snowplow equipment. Attached is a steel post mailbox support diagram, which has been approved for use in City of Rockville. This mailbox configuration has been crash tested and is acceptable in terms of nationally tested safety criteria. The use of this approved mailbox support provides a much safer environment for all motorists. It also makes the job of snow removal much easier and reduces cost and irritation to the mail patron when boxes are destroyed due to flying snow.

This policy is intended to minimize damage to mailboxes during snow plowing operations, while providing consistent, convenient access to mailboxes and newspaper delivery. Specific elements of the policy are as follows:

I. Configuration Requirements of Mailbox Supports

All mailbox supports shall be swing-away style, constructed and installed in conformance with the attached detailed drawings and specifications.

II. Call Before You Dig

48 hours prior to installation of any new mailbox support, contact the Gopher State One Call for utility locates (1-800-252-1166) non-emergency number.

III. Replacement of Unlawful Mailbox Supports and Installations

Any mailbox support deemed unlawful by the City of Rockville Maintenance Department, as defined by Minnesota Rules Chapter 8818, shall be replaced. Once a support is deemed unlawful, the owner will be notified in writing that the owner shall replace within 60 days. The owner must purchase and supply the approved support. An unlawful support remaining after the expiration of the 60-day time period will be removed and replaced by the City at the owner's expense up to \$75.00 to cover the costs incurred. Further it should be noted that the City of Rockville will replace any unlawful mailbox support as part of a road reconstruction project which will be assessed as a part of the project.

IV. Replacement of Damaged Mailbox Supports by City of Rockville

The Maintenance Department will replace an approved swing-away style mailbox support damaged by City equipment during snowplowing operations or other maintenance activities provided the support was properly installed according to U.S. Postal and City of Rockville Maintenance Department standards. The City will not replace supports damaged by third parties. The owner must purchase and supply the approved support. The City will not install nonconforming supports.

V. Miscellaneous Attachments to Mailbox Supports

Newspaper delivery boxes, advertisement delivery boxes, nameplates, Blue 911 address plates, etc., shall not be installed underneath the mailbox, whether attached to the mailbox support or on a separate post. The area underneath the mailbox shall remain free of obstructions in order to allow the unhindered passage of the snowplow wing blade. Obstacles interfering with the wing blade force the plow to swerve, often into the oncoming lane, creating an unsafe situation for motorists and plow operators. The approved drawings allow for the attachment of delivery boxes to the side of the mailbox. Otherwise, a separate approved support, located no closer than 30 inches, shall be installed at the sole cost of the property owner.

Owners of approved swing-away style mailbox supports with items attached or on separate supports in a nonconforming manner will be notified in writing to correct deficiencies within 60 days. Items not corrected within 60 days will be removed by the City at the owner's expense up to \$75.00.

VI. Ownership of Mailbox Supports

Mailboxes and mailbox supports are the property of the mail route patron. The City of Rockville does not issue written permits for the placement of mailboxes within the road right-of-way, nor do our easements provide for mailbox construction. All mailboxes placed within the road right-of-way are placed there at the owner's risk. Replacement or installation of mailbox supports by the City does not signify any change of ownership. The support remains the property of the owner and it is the owner's responsibility to maintain to conformance standards.

VII. Interruption of Mail Delivery

When the City must remove and replace a mailbox support, it shall be done in such a manner as to cause no interruption of mail delivery if at all possible.

VIII. New Construction

Any new building construction that needs postal service will be required to install the current approved mailbox support.

IX. Spacing of Mailbox Supports

In accordance with Minnesota Rules Chapter 8818, mailbox supports shall be spaced no closer than 30 inches.