

Examples of Unsafe Installations

For the safety of the traveling public, the following installations are considered to be a road hazard on roads with a posted speed limit of 40 mph, or greater.

The following list illustrates examples of prohibited mailbox installations.

- 1) Installations with more than one vertical support.
- 2) A single support containing more than two mailboxes unless specifically approved by local road authority.
- 3) A mailbox that is not U.S. Postal Service approved.
- 4) Adjacent installations whose supports are closer than 30 inches measured from center-of-post to center-of-post.
- 5) Any neighborhood delivery or collection box unit (cluster boxes).
- 6) A support using unsafe materials stronger than the wooden 4 x 4-inch post or 2-inch diameter metal pipe.
- 7) Supports or mailboxes that encroach on a lane or shoulder of the roadway.



Is Your Mailbox a
Hazard?



Unsafe mailbox installations cause property damage, injury and even death.



Awareness

No one wants to be responsible for a fatality, but sometimes the public is not aware of what might be a safety concern.



Mailboxes (specifically their support tubes) often are constructed as a home decoration or are constructed to withstand snow removal efforts; unfortunately some of these designs are roadside hazards. To address this issue, State Legislation was enacted in 1991.

Legislation

Under Minnesota Statute 169.072 and Minnesota Rule 8818, local road authorities have the ability to develop and adopt rules regarding mailbox installations. The law, enacted by the 1991 Minnesota legislature, advises that mailbox installations should meet both national and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) standards and recommendations regarding breakaway installations and location. Installations that do not meet the standards and recommendations may be removed and replaced at the owner's expense by the local road authority.



Steps for Replacing a Hazardous Mailbox

The general procedure for bringing a hazardous mailbox into compliance.

- Inform owner/resident that mailbox is non-conforming
- Inform owner/resident of mailbox installation standards
- Provide timeframe for replacement or modification
- If owner does not comply, agency will replace mailbox and may bill owner

Example of Preferred Installation - Minnesota Swing-Away Mailbox



For additional information about proper mailbox installations, go to:
www.lrrb.org

Acceptable Installations

Please contact your city or county engineer and post office for recommended specific installations. In general, installations should be light in weight, yet sturdy enough to resist sagging and able to stand up to snow thrown by snowplows. Moreover, they should break away when struck by an errant vehicle.

Accepted supports include:

- Swing away type installation (preferred)
- 4 x 4-inch wooden post (maximum size) or a 2-inch or less diameter metal pipe
- Minimum spacing between multiple box supports is $\frac{3}{4}$ of support's height above ground

Current Mn/DOT standards allow no more than one mailboxes per single support; if more than one mailboxes are on a single support, support must meet national crash tests.



4 x 4-inch Wooden Post



2-inch diameter metal pipe



Coat Hanger Mailbox