

Helpful Winter Snow Removal Tips

It's that time of year when snow plows are on the road again. On our website you will find some tips that might help you through the long winter.

Do not shovel, snow blow or have your driveway plowed into or across the roads. That is prohibited by law and can cause a serious traffic hazard. If possible, it is best to place snow on the side of your driveway opposite the direction from which the plow is coming. That way, the plow will carry snow away from your driveway rather than back into it.

If possible, wait until the highway has been plowed before cleaning out the end of your driveway. There is no practical way to plow the highway without depositing snow into your driveway. Please understand the Town cannot go back and shovel or plow out the end of any private driveway.

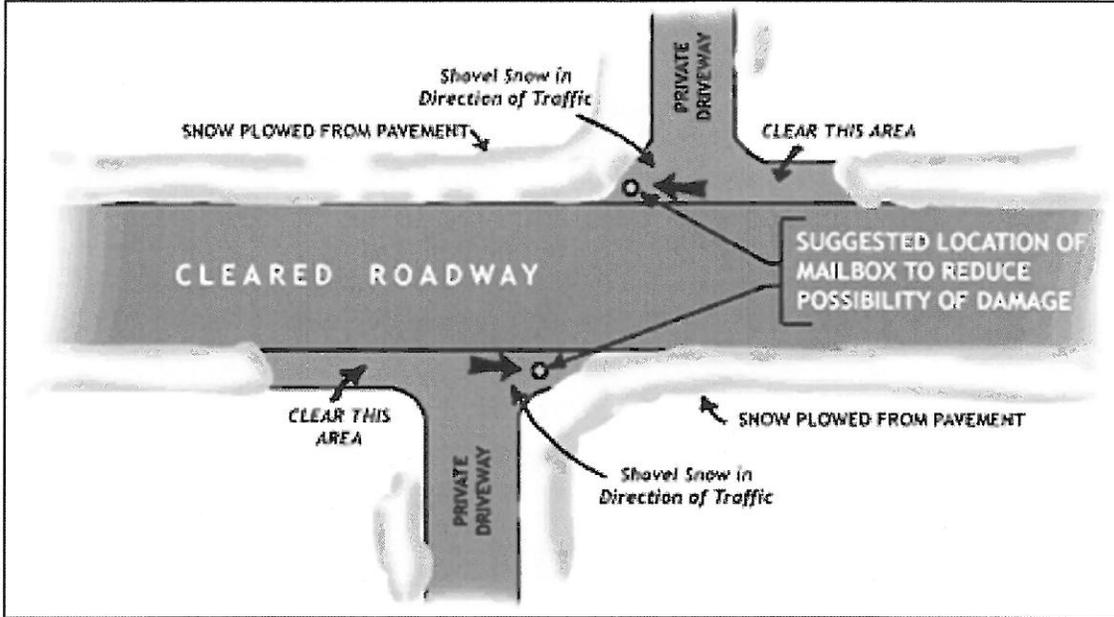
Help reduce the possibility of a broken mailbox post. All our plow operators are urged to take precautions to avoid hitting mailbox posts, however experience has shown that with reduced visibility during a storm it is not always possible for a driver to see a post in time to avoid striking it with the wing of the plow. Any installation within the highway right-of-way, including a mailbox, is placed there at the owners risk. Therefore owners are encouraged to put mailboxes at the maximum usable distance back from the roadway pavement and we recommend a 42"- 48" mounting height with reflectors on the post. Posts should also be checked for deterioration such as rot to reduce the possibility of their being broken off simply by the weight of plowed snow. The Town is not responsible for replacing your mailbox.

You will find a sketch showing how your driveway can be initially cleared to reduce the possibility that after the plow passes you will be snowbound again. We suggest that you clear your driveway in the manner suggested in the sketch. If you shovel snow in the direction of traffic, and make a pocket next to your driveway as shown, snow accumulation on the plow will drop into that pocket and only a bare minimum will go into the driveway opening.

Mailbox Installation Standards

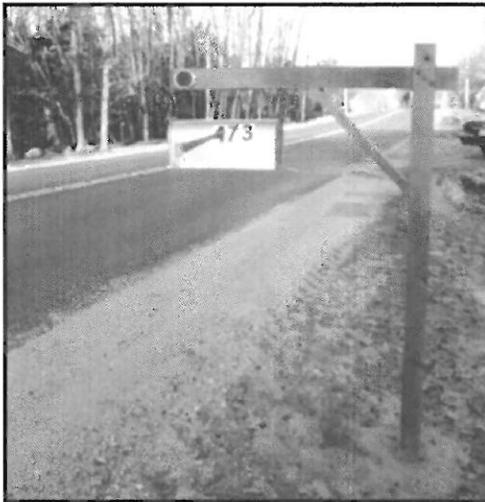
General Location:

Whenever possible, your mailbox should be located after your driveway opening. This location placement improves visibility, minimizes the amount of snow that comes off of the snow plow, and improves the approach for your mail carrier. The diagram below further clarifies this preferred placement:



Mailbox Support Design:

In many cases, it is best to use an extended arm type of post with a free-swinging suspended mailbox. This allows snowplows to sweep near or under boxes without damage to supports and provides easy access to the boxes by carrier and customers. The following picture shows a free-swinging suspended mailbox:



In addition, note the strategic placement of the red reflector on the point closest to the road. This will help your local snowfighter see and avoid your mailbox during winter storms.

Offset:

Mailboxes should be set back from the edge of the shoulder – regardless of whether the shoulder is gravel or paved. In other words, the face of the mailbox should be at least **one foot (1')** back from the edge of **the normally plowed surface** of the highway or the face of curb. Greater offset distances are encouraged whenever possible to allow the mail carrier to get further out of traffic and to further minimize potential damage to your mailbox. The following picture shows a mailbox with a reasonable offset:

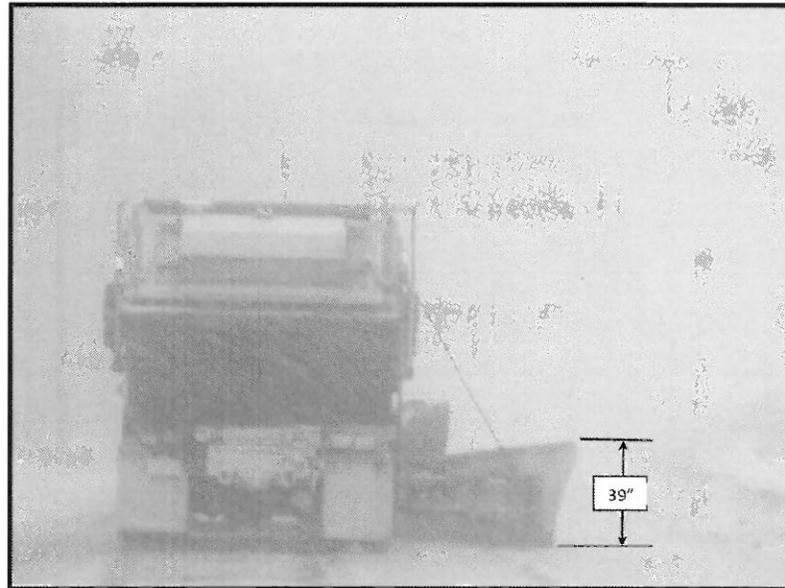


Mailboxes in sidewalk areas should leave at least 36" behind the back of the box or the post, whichever is located the furthest from the road.



Height:

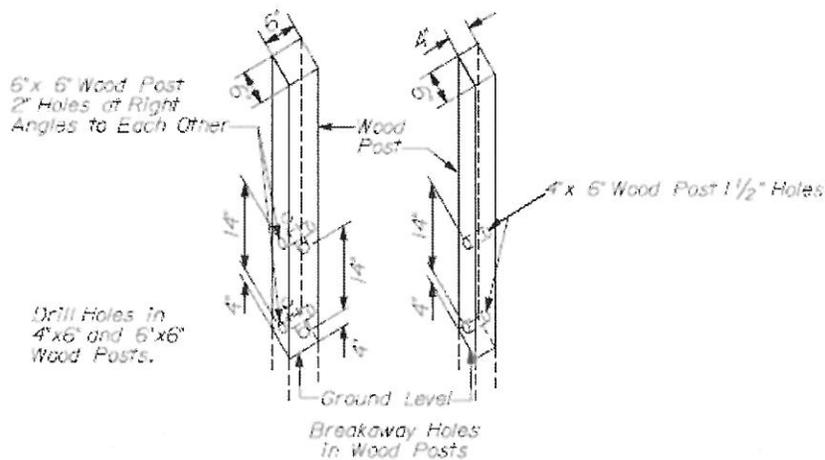
According to USPS standards, a mailbox must be installed with the bottom of the mailbox located between 41" and 45" high above the surface of the highway shoulder. We recommend that this height be closer to the 45" measurement to minimize conflict with the height of the plow truck wing when snow is being pushed back during, or between, winter storms. The following picture further clarifies the height considerations:



Post Size, Type and Embedment:

Mailbox posts must be sturdy enough to hold up the mailbox in all types of weather conditions, however they cannot be so rugged that they present a hazard to vehicles that inadvertently leave the road. If a mailbox support is struck by a vehicle, it must easily break away. Therefore, the following types of posts are deemed acceptable:

- **4" x 4" wooden posts** embedded **2 feet** into the ground. Larger wooden posts (4" x 6" or 6" x 6") may be used only if the post is drilled through with an appropriate spade bit to create a shear plane. The following diagram indicates the necessary holes and spacing.



- **1" to 2" round diameter steel or aluminum pipe or standard U-channel post** embedded **2 feet** into the ground.

- Unacceptable mailbox supports include: anything that is filled with concrete, masonry and stone structures, heavy steel structures, and most objects that were intended for other uses (e.g. antique plows, I-beams, and various other household tools and objects).

NOTICE: Mailboxes, attachments or support systems not consistent with this policy are considered “Deadly Fixed Objects” (aka. “DFOs”) and are in violation of 23 MRSA §1401-A on state and state aid roads. On local roads, they can be considered as “obstructions” and a number of statutes relate to these obstructions. As such, when these installations are recognized by the municipality, the owner will be informed of the hazard and immediate removal will be requested. If the property owner does not comply with this request, the municipality may elect to remove the installation and seek reimbursement from the property owner for all costs incurred.