

Mailboxes

Mailboxes are the only structure that private owners are permitted to install within the public right-of-way. Neither the Forest County Highway Department nor U.S. Postal Service issue written permits for the placement of mailboxes within the public right-of-way.

Ownership and Liability

The mailbox installation and support, along with the ongoing maintenance and conformity with current U.S. Postal Service standards, are the responsibility of the property owner. All mailboxes placed within the public right-of-way are owned by the property owner and are placed there at the owner's risk. This section of the manual is not intended to and shall not be construed to create any affirmative duty on the part of the Forest County Highway Department to locate and remove improperly installed mailboxes.

Location and Installation of Mailboxes

The proper location and installation of mailboxes can minimize potential hazards and provide for safe travel, convenient mail delivery, and effectively accommodate maintenance activities. **Figure A & Figure B** display the proper location of a mailbox. Mailboxes should be conveniently placed so the carrier does not have to leave the vehicle to deliver the mail. All mailboxes should be mounted at a height of 41 to 45 inches from the road surface to the bottom of the mailbox, mailbox should be 6" to 8" back from curb or edge of shoulder, and the post should be buried no more than 24" deep. The U.S. Postal Service recommends that property owners contact the postmaster or carrier before erecting or replacing mailboxes and supports as installation recommendations may vary due to road, shoulder, and curb conditions.

Figure A

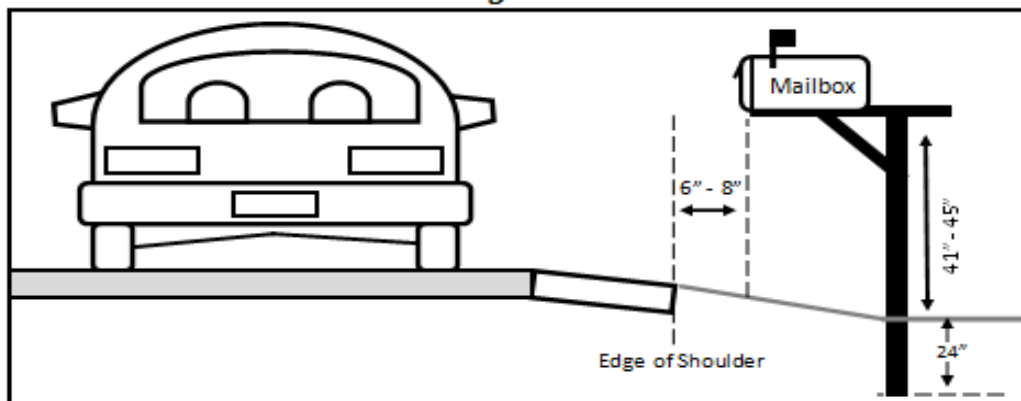
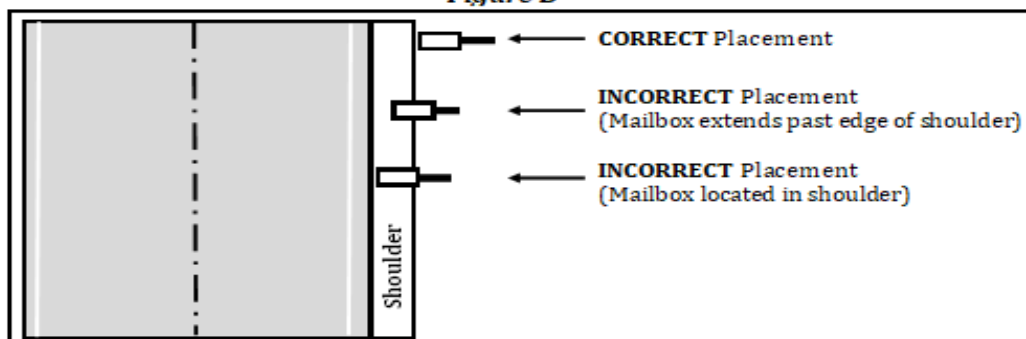


Figure B



Mailbox Supports

Mailbox supports must be designed so that if struck, it will bend or fall away from the striking vehicle to prevent severe damage to the vehicle or injury to the traveling public. Massive supports such as telephone poles, heavy metal posts, concrete posts, antique farm equipment, or other similar items are prohibited. No other objects, including, but not limited to, landscaping boulders or fences may be placed near the mailbox. If possible, all newspaper tubes and mailboxes shall be placed on the same post to avoid unnecessary posts within the public right-of-way. The following illustrates examples of unacceptable mailbox installations and supports:

- Mailboxes or supports that encroach upon the travel way or shoulder of a roadway.
- Installations with more than one vertical support.
- A single support containing more than two mailboxes unless specifically approved by the Highway Department
- A support using unsafe materials stronger than a wooded 4 x 4 inch post or a 2 inch diameter metal pipe that weighs more than three (3) pounds per lineal foot.
- A mailbox that is not U.S. Postal Service approved.
- Adjacent mailbox installations whose respective supports are spaced closer than 30 inches measured from center of support to center of support
- Any neighborhood delivery or collection box units.

Replacement of Damaged Mailboxes

The Forest County Highway Department will repair or replace properly located and installed mailboxes and/or supports damaged by actual physical contact with a county highway department truck or equipment. The Forest County Highway Department will not replace any mailbox that is damaged by snow striking the mailbox during snow removal operations. The Highway Department does not provide special mailbox installations or decorative designs. Replacement mailboxes will be limited to standard metal/plastic mailboxes.

The Highway Department will attempt to replace all damaged mailboxes within seven (7) days of being notified. However, weather conditions and/or maintenance activities (e.g. excessive snow piles, frozen ground, on-going snow removal) may delay repair or replacement of damaged mailboxes. If this occurs, a temporary mailbox may be installed until such time that the damaged mailbox can be adequately repaired or replaced.

Owners Responsibilities

The U.S. Postal Service states that customers must remove obstructions, including vehicles, trash cans, and snow, that impedes the efficient delivery of mail. The Highway Department also encourages the removal of snow near mailboxes to help facilitate the safe and convenient delivery of mail, reduce potential conflicts between mail delivery vehicles and the traveling public, and to reduce the possibility of damaged mailboxes resulting from repeated snowplowing and pushing of snow toward the mailbox.