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**TOWN OF
HAMPDEN**
IN THE TOWN COUNCIL

Peter Erickson (Dist 1)
Christine Cubberley (Dist 2)
Mark Cormier (Dist 3)
Allen Esposito (Dist 4)

Order 2023-01

Adoption: January 3, 2023

ORDER ESTABLISHING THE MAILBOX POLICY FOR THE TOWN OF HAMPDEN

ORDERED, that the Town Council hereby approves a Mailbox Policy for mailbox installations within the right-of-way of Hampden's public streets.

For convenience and practicality, mailbox installations are allowed within the right-of-way of Maine's public highways; however such installations have two conditions:

- 1) The mailbox must be installed in accordance with applicable standards (See Attachment) to ensure that mail can be delivered, and that the mailbox does not create an obstacle or safety hazard to those that use or maintain the highway, and
- 2) The mailbox is installed entirely at the owner's risk. In other words, if the mailbox incurs damage during any sort of highway operations or maintenance, the property owner is not entitled to replacement or compensation. In fact, if the mailbox was not installed in accordance with the applicable standards as stated above, the owner may be held liable for injuries or damages that may have been incurred as a result.

Mailbox design and installation standards are available from several sources, and mailbox owners are expected to consult this information prior to undertaking any mailbox installation or replacement. The following standards have nationwide relevance and were developed in cooperation with one another:

- The United States Postal Service (USPS) Mailbox Guidelines. The USPS defines the standards for mailbox construction, as well as the placement tolerance that must be met to accommodate postal operations. Specifics may be obtained from your local post office or online at: <https://www.usps.com/manage/mailboxes.htm>
- It should be noted that the northeast states have different regulations from those found on the USPS website so you should consult your local Post Office for specifics. The attachment in this policy reflects the most current requirements in the northeast states.

- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Roadside Design Guide. The AASHTO Roadside Design Guide, Chapter 11: *Erecting Mailboxes on Streets and Highways* deals with the safety and construction of privately owned mailboxes, mailbox supports, and mailbox turnout designs and is less focused on postal operations. This publication may be obtained online through the AASHTO Bookstore at: https://bookstore.transportation.org/Item_details.aspx?id=1807

The Town of Hampden has developed this policy to promote compliance with these national standards and to help further clarify the expectations and responsibilities of Maine mailbox owners to improve the safety of our roads.

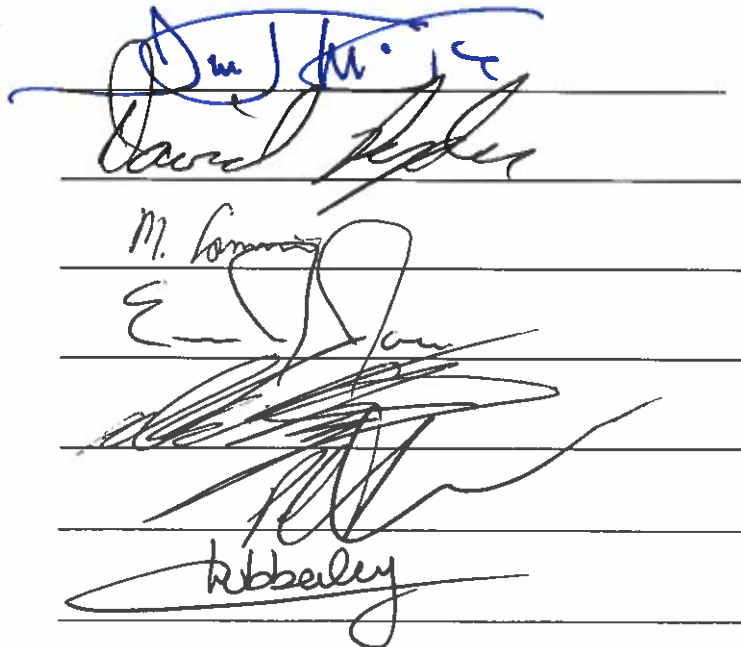
The attached pages further specify the details associated with the mailbox height, location, offset, and post type to minimize the potential hazards associated with mailbox installations and to reduce the opportunities for damage to mailboxes.

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. If a mailbox was not installed in accordance with the applicable standards and is deemed to be an obstruction, the owner may be held liable for injuries or damages that have been incurred as a result.



Town Clerk

APPROVED by a majority of the Town Council:

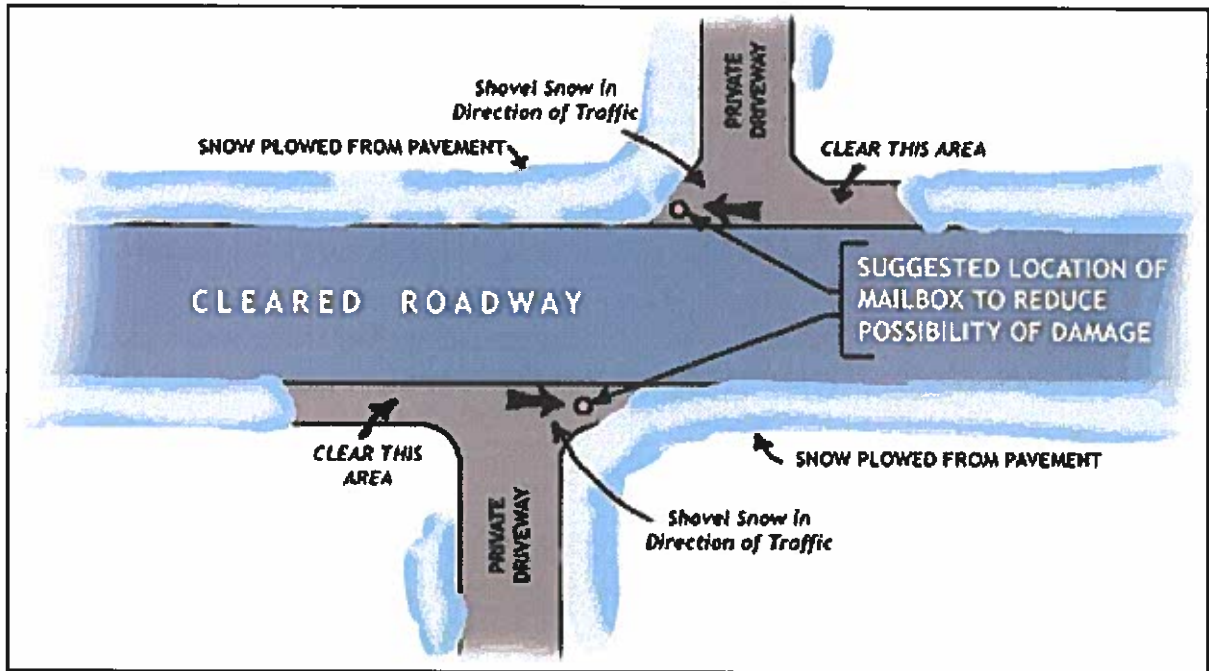


Attachment: Mailbox Installation Standards - General Location; Mailbox Support Design; Offset; Height; and Post Size, Type and Embedment

Attachment to Town of Hampden Mailbox Policy: Mailbox Installation Standards

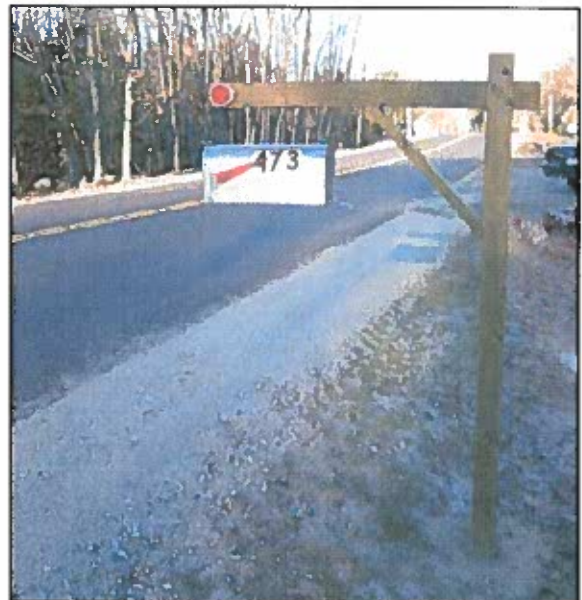
General Location:

Whenever possible, mailboxes 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 the mail carrier. The diagram below further clarifies this preferred placement:



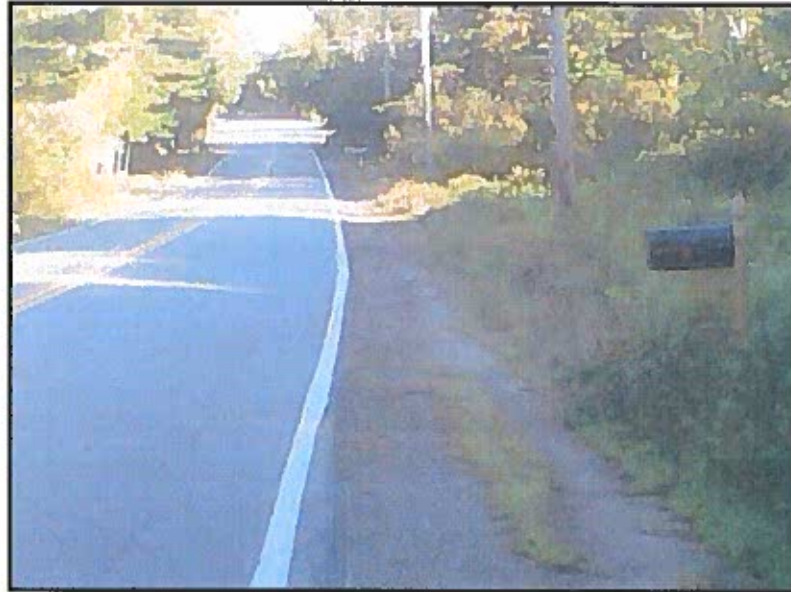
Mailbox Support Design:

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 picture to the right shows a free-swinging suspended mailbox:



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 minimize potential damage to your mailbox. The following picture shows a mailbox with a reasonable offset:



Height:

According to USPS standards in the northeast states, a mailbox must be installed with the bottom of the mailbox located 48" high above the surface of the highway shoulder. We recommend that this height to minimize conflict with the height of the plow truck wing when snow is being pushed back during, or between, winter storms. The picture to the right 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 acceptable:

- **4" x 4" wooden posts** embedded **2 feet** into the ground. Larger wooden posts may be used only if the post is drilled through with an appropriate spade bit to create a shear plane that is no higher than 6" above the surface of the surrounding ground. The number and size of the drilled holes depends upon what is necessary to bring the cross-section of the larger post down to the equivalent cross-sectional area of a standard 4" x 4" post. (MaineDOT Standard Specification 606.06)
- **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).