

PRICE COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

***POLICY FOR THE ACCOMMODATION OF MAILBOXES AND NEWSPAPER
DELIVERY BOXES ON HIGHWAY
RIGHT-OF-WAYS***

No mailbox or newspaper delivery box will be allowed to exist on the highway right-of-way if it interferes with the safety of the traveling public or the function, maintenance, or operation of the highway system. A mailbox installation that does not conform to the provisions of this regulation is an unauthorized encroachment under State Statute 86.04.

The location and construction of mailboxes shall conform to the rules and regulations of the US Postal Service as well as to standards established by the Price County Highway Department. Standards for the location and construction of mailboxes are available from:

**Price County Highway Department
P.O. Box 169
704 North Lake Avenue
Phillips, WI 54555
715-339-3081**

A mailbox installation that conforms to the following criteria will be considered acceptable unless in the judgement of the Highway Commissioner, the installation interferes with the safety of the traveling public or the function, maintenance, or operation of the highway system.

LOCATION

Mailboxes shall be located on the right-hand side of the roadway in the direction of the delivery route. The bottom of the box shall be set at an elevation established by the US Postal Service, usually between 42" and 48" above the roadway surface. The roadside face of the box shall be offset from the edge of the shoulder 6 inches. Under no circumstance should the mailbox face or front of the box extend past the outside edge of the shoulder.

Exceptions to the lateral placement criteria above will exist on residential streets and certain designated rural roads where the Highway Department deems it in the public interest to permit lesser clearances or to require greater clearances. On curbed streets, the roadside face of the mailbox shall be set back from the face of curb a distance between 6 and 12 inches. On residential streets without curbs or all weather shoulders and that carry low traffic volumes operating at low speeds, the roadside face of a mailbox shall be offset between 8 and 12 inches behind the edge of pavement.

Where a mailbox is located at a driveway entrance, it shall be placed on the far side of the driveway in the direction of the delivery route.

Where a mailbox is located at an intersecting road, it shall be located a minimum of 100 feet beyond the center of the intersecting road in the direction of the delivery route. This distance shall be increased to 200 feet when the average daily traffic on the intersecting road exceeds 400 vehicles per day.

STRUCTURE

Mailboxes shall be of light sheet metal or plastic construction conforming to the requirements of the US Postal Service. Newspaper delivery boxes shall be of light sheet metal or plastic construction of minimum dimensions suitable for holding a newspaper. Heavy, large, or ornamental mailboxes are ***not recommended***. These mailboxes are a hazard to the traveling public. They can be distracting and lighter mailboxes are designed specifically to minimize damage if a collision occurs.

No more than two mailboxes may be mounted on a support structure unless the support structure and mailbox arrangement have been shown to be safe by crash testing. However, lightweight newspaper boxes may be mounted below the mailbox on the side of the mailbox support.

Mailbox supports shall not be set in concrete unless the support design has been shown to be safe by crash tests when so installed.

A single 4 inch x 4 inch (nominal) or 4 inch diameter wooden post or a metal post with a strength no greater than a 1½ inch diameter standard strength steel pipe and embedded no more than 24 inches into the ground will be acceptable as a mailbox support. A metal post shall not be fitted with an anchor plate, but it may have an anti-twist device that extends no more than 10 inches below the ground surface.

The post-to-box attachment details should be of sufficient strength to prevent the box from separating from the post top if the installation is struck by a vehicle.

The minimum spacing between the centers of support posts shall be three fourths the height of the posts above the groundline.

Mailbox support designs not described in this policy will be acceptable if approved by the Price County Highway Commissioner.

Only “swing-away” style installations are recommended on all right-of-ways maintained by the Price County Highway Department. While Postal Service requirements and safety concerns can be addressed by other installations, only a “swing-away” type box accommodates the needs of highway maintenance activities, especially winter maintenance.

See Appendix A for examples of approved mailbox installations.

SHOULDER REPAIRS

It will be the responsibility of the postal patron to inform the Highway Department of any new or existing mailbox installation where shoulder construction is inadequate to permit all weather vehicular access to the mailbox.

REMOVAL OF NONCONFORMING OR UNSAFE MAILBOXES

Any mailbox that is found to violate the intent of this policy shall be removed by the postal patron upon notification by the Price County Highway Department. At the discretion of the Highway Department, based on an assessment of hazard to the public, the patron will be granted not less than 24 hours nor more than 30 days to remove an unacceptable mailbox. After the specified removal period has expired, the unacceptable mailbox will be removed by the Price County Highway Department at the patron’s expense, as per State Statute 86.04. See Appendix B for a copy of the pertinent section of State Statute 86.04.

MAILBOXES DAMAGED BY HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

In Price County, snow removal operations and summer maintenance operations frequently conflict with mailboxes. The Price County Highway Department's employees shall make every reasonable effort to avoid damage to mailboxes. Adherence to the recommendations of this policy should minimize conflicts and safety problems, however in the event damage occurs to a mailbox on the highway right-of-way, the following procedures shall be followed by Price County Highway Department personnel.

Step 1 – A representative of the Department shall record the complaint and visit the mail box site.

Step 2 – If it can be reasonably ascertained that the damage was not caused by Price County Highway Department maintenance operations or if the damage was not caused by direct contact with Department maintenance equipment (flying snow or ice from plowing operations does not constitute direct contact), it shall be the responsibility of the postal patron to repair or replace their damaged mailbox. The postal patron shall be provided a copy of the Department's policy and guidelines for proper mailbox installation. No further action is required. Go to Step 3, if the damage is due to direct contact with Price County Highway Department equipment.

Step 3 – If it can be reasonably ascertained that the mailbox was damaged due to direct contact with Department maintenance equipment, the following assessment shall be made:

- A. If the mailbox installation is as recommended by the Department and meets all requirements, the Department shall replace the mailbox with a standard mailbox approved by the US Postal Service. The Department will not pay for the replacement of decorative or non-standard boxes. The mailbox support shall also be repaired at Department expense.
- B. If the mailbox is a swing away style installation that fails to meet standards with respect to location or height, the Department shall replace the mailbox with a standard mailbox approved by the US Postal Service. The Department will not pay for the replacement of decorative or non-standard boxes. The mailbox support shall not be repaired at Department expense. The postal patron shall be provided a copy of the Department's policy and guidelines for proper mailbox installation. No further replacement or repairs will be made by the Department until such time as the installation meets all standards and requirements.
- C. If the mailbox is a non-recommended installation meeting all standards for location, height, and structure, the Department shall replace the mailbox with a standard mailbox approved by the US Postal Service. The Department will not pay for the replacement of decorative or non standard boxes. The mailbox support shall not be repaired at Department expense. The postal patron shall be provided a copy of the Department's policy and guidelines for proper mailbox installation. No further replacement or repairs will be made by the Department until such time as a properly placed swing away design support is in place.
- D. If the mailbox is a non recommended installation and is improperly located and / or is a safety hazard. The Department shall not replace or repair the mailbox or its support. The postal patrol shall be provided a copy of the Department's policy and guidelines for proper mailbox installation.

APPLICABILITY

This policy shall apply to all highways maintained by the Price County Highway Department.