



Urban Mailbox Installation Guidelines

Minnesota
Department of
Transportation

**RESEARCH
SERVICES**

Office of
Policy Analysis,
Research &
Innovation

Michael Marti, Primary Author
SRF Consulting Group

July 2010

Research Project
Final Report #2010MAIL



Your Destination...Our Priority



Technical Report Documentation Page

1. Report No. MN/RC 2010MAIL	2.	3. Recipients Accession No.	
4. Title and Subtitle Urban Mailbox Installation Guidelines		5. Report Date	
		6. July 2010	
7. Author(s) Michael Marti, Renae Kuehl		8. Performing Organization Report No.	
9. Performing Organization Name and Address SRF Consulting Group, Inc. One Carlson Parkway North, Suite 150 Minneapolis, Minnesota 55477-4443		10. Project/Task/Work Unit No.	
		11. Contract (C) or Grant (G) No. RIC Task 6b	
12. Sponsoring Organization Name and Address Minnesota Department of Transportation Research Services Section 395 John Ireland Boulevard MS 330 St. Paul, Minnesota 55155		13. Type of Report and Period Covered Final Report	
		14. Sponsoring Agency Code	
15. Supplementary Notes http://www.lrrb.org/PDF/2010MAIL.pdf http://www.lrrb.org/PDF/2010MAILB.pdf is the brochure			
16. Abstract (Limit: 250 words) As a supplement to the rural mailboxes brochure, the following information was provided by the City of Eagan as an example to provide guidance for urban mailbox installation. The city developed the following documents to educate the city council and residents on the need for proper mailbox installation: - Standard Plate – Mail and Paper box installation guidelines - Memo to Mayor and City Councilmembers – Summary of need to standardize mailboxes to reduce damage due to winter maintenance. - Resident notice flyer – sent to residents with non-complying mailboxes notifying them of the need to modify their mailbox to avoid damage due to winter maintenance.			
17. Document Analysis/Descriptors Mailbox Mailbox installation Urban mailboxes		18. Availability Statement No restrictions. Document available from: National Technical Information Services, Alexandria, Virginia 22312	
19. Security Class (this report) Unclassified	20. Security Class (this page) Unclassified	21. No. of Pages 7	22. Price

Minimum Height – 48 Inches
above street level

Address must be on side of
box from which carrier
approaches in letters a
minimum of one inch high.
(or on the front where boxes
are grouped).

Front of Mail Box
Behind
Back of Curb

48"

Front of Paper
Boxes shall not
Extend Forward
of Vertical Post
(If lower than 48")

10"

"Safety Clear
Zone"



City of Eagan

Engineering Department

MAIL & PAPER BOX INSTALLATION GUIDELINES

REVISED

8/06

STANDARD
PLATE

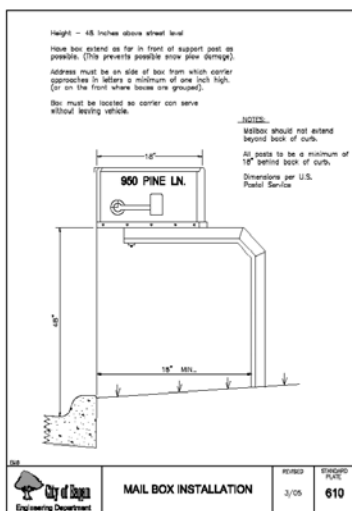
610



MEMO



A Typical Community Mailbox
at Risk of Being Struck by Winter
Maintenance Equipment
(too low and forward of back of curb)



Current City Standard Plate
For Mailbox installation

**TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
THOMAS L. HEDGES, CITY ADMINISTRATOR**

**FROM: THOMAS A. COLBERT, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS
TOM STRUVE, SUPT. OF STREETS, EQUIPMENT**

DATE: DECEMBER 7, 2006

**SUBJECT: MAIL BOX PROBLEMS RELATED TO CITY
WINTER MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Eagan's public works managers are struggling with how to deal with distressed or out of specifications mailboxes damaged in the process of winter maintenance operations. Following is a summary of proposed proactive changes in Current City Policy.

1. Revise standard City Plate more clearly setting mailbox standards
2. Distribute information about the new policy for mailbox hits and inform residents/owners of mailboxes that are at risk
3. Develop a program that would provide residents an opportunity to have mailboxes in their residential neighborhoods refurbished contractually as a part of the neighborhood overlay programs.

BACKGROUND

As our community matures, Eagan's winter maintenance operations are more and more impacted by mailboxes that are aging and are/were installed improperly. At the same time, customer service expectations have risen for our customers/citizens to the point that referring to an obscure mailbox standard that is not readily available to the public is no longer effective in dealing with the problem.

The community is blanketed with mailboxes of every different size/type. Many individual homeowners take great pride in their personal amenities and mailboxes that border Eagan streets in public boulevards. Some of these residents have very expensive and unique mailboxes; others have marginally acceptable mailboxes in very poor condition, and, still others have boxes that were installed by the developers of their unique neighborhoods. In every case, if snow and ice control equipment comes in contact with their mailboxes, they expect replacement or at least repair.

Past Policy has been to inform residents who call to report damage of the US Post Office specifications and the City Standard Plate requiring a minimum of 48" from the front bottom corner of the mailbox to the valley of the curb and the need for the front corner to be located behind the back of the curb. Residents are informed that if their mailbox did not meet these specifications, no repairs or replacement will occur. ***Very seldom is this acceptable as a solution to the problem.*** Residents typically ***insist*** that repairs are made or replacement occurs.



It is important to note that it is very much the exception that City equipment comes into contact with mailboxes that are installed providing the recommended 48" *clear zone*. Virtually all mailboxes damaged during plowing operations are installed too low or forward of the back of the curb.

Mailbox Hits

2005-6	- Fifteen
2004-5	- Eighteen
2003-4	- Forty-two

1. NEW STANDARD PLATE

An ideal mailbox design has been adopted/installed by the Manley Developers in new developments adjacent to Dodd Rd. south of Cliff Road. We have incorporated this design into a new, easy to understand, standard City Mailbox Plate. (please see attached draft new standard City Plate for mailboxes)



Another Community Mailbox
at Risk of Being Struck by Winter
Maintenance Equipment
(too low and forward of back of curb)



Example of Community Mailboxes
Where Paper Boxes Were
Struck by
Winter Maintenance Equipment
(too low and forward of back of curb)



Mailboxes Installed in
Manley Addition
(Dodd Rd. south of Cliff Rd)



Another Community Mailbox
at Risk of Being Struck by Winter
Maintenance Equipment

(too low and forward of back of curb)



New Manley Mailbox
Construction/Design
Providing 48" Clear Zone
For Winter Maintenance Operations

2. CHANGES TO THE CURRENT POLICY FOR MAILBOX HITS- (Informing Residents that Their Current Mailboxes are at Risk)

From: City of Eagan Snow and Ice Policy for City Streets (pls see attachment)
(Adopted by City Council on December 20, 1999)

IV. BOULEVARD CONSIDERATIONS

- A. Sect. B. The City replaces mailboxes that are damaged, broken, or knocked down only if there was a direct hit by a City plow or City vehicle provided the mailbox was installed and maintained to City and postal specifications. Those specifications require mailboxes be located at least 48" above the street level with the forward bottom corner located behind the back of the curb. Residents/owners notified by the City via U.S. Mail about mailboxes that do not meet specifications are responsible to repair/maintain mailboxes in the event of contact with City Snow and Ice Equipment.

City Maintenance Managers are planning incremental distribution of copies of the new revised Standard Mailbox Plate along with specific information about individual mailboxes that need re-furbishing to residents throughout the community. Personnel will canvas sections of the City and notices will be mailed to residents/owners providing information and support resources as necessary to attempt to bring all community mailboxes to a standard that will prevent future contact/damage. (please see attached draft flyers to be distributed)

*Support resources may include providing a list of City approved contractor(s) who are trained to install mailboxes per City specifications.

A NEW PROGRAM WILL PROVIDE RESIDENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE MAILBOXES IN THEIR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS REFURBISHED CONTRACTUALLY AS A PART OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD OVERLAY PROGRAMS.

City representatives are preparing to provide the opportunity at the time of Residential Neighborhood Meetings (prior to Public Hearings) for residents to learn about the possibility of refurbishing entire neighborhoods with mailboxes per City Standard in conjunction with our neighborhood refurbishment program (overlays).

This 20 year time frame may be ideal for the life cycle of a typical mailbox. Additionally, this pro-active initiative will fit well with already in place refurbishing of signage, notification of sightline obstructions and removal of boulevard amenities encroaching in rights of way currently being addressed at the 20 year overlay interval.

As always, we would welcome the opportunity to provide any additional information that the City Council may need.

Respectfully,

Tom Colbert, Director of Public Works
Tom Struve, Superintendent of Street and Equipment



Please Note...



City of Eagan winter maintenance operations require that residential mailboxes provide a 48" CLEAR ZONE (see attachment) between the bottom front corner of the mailbox structures/paper boxes and the valley of the curb. Structures must also be located behind the back of the concrete curbing.

YOUR MAILBOX at:

IS IN DANGER OF DAMAGE BECAUSE:

- ☐ *Front bottom structures are too low (less than 48")*
- ☐ *Mailbox/paper boxes are located forward of the back of the curb.*
- ☐ *Is in need of refurbishing (aging/deteriorating post or structure may not stand impact of snow from plow)*

PLEASE make appropriate changes/repairs as needed.

The City of Eagan will not repair/replace your mailbox if damaged by winter maintenance activities in its current condition

Questions? Please contact

Kurt Schlegel or Tim Plath, Streets Maintenance
651-675-5300

(**Tear off here** and mail to: Eagan Central Maint., 3501 Coachman Pt., Eagan MN 55122)
Or notify us via e-mail at: Tplath@cityofeagan.com

(**Please notify us** when refurbishing/replacement occurs for a compliance inspection)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

DAY TIME PHONE _____