



POLICY / GUIDELINE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

CATEGORY:	STREETS	NUMBER:	33
FROM:	SHAWN STAUSKE	P.W.C. APPROVAL:	1-14-13
DATE:	1-16-13	C.C. APPROVAL:	1-15-13
SUBJECT:	MAILBOX DAMAGE	REVISED:	1-13-14

The City will consider claims for repairs to mailboxes damaged as a result of being struck by City equipment performing work in the right-of-way (snow plowing, leaf collection, street sweeping, etc.). Claimants should contact Dane County for mailbox damage that may have resulted from County activities. Basketball hoops, irrigation systems, pet containment systems, fences, planted areas, and other private improvements within the City right-of-way are not permitted, and the City will not be liable for damage to them under any circumstances.

The City will reimburse the costs for repair or replacement of mailboxes and/or posts that have been directly hit by City equipment, and which were installed and maintained in conformance with U.S. postal specifications for minimum height and setback from the curb. The City will not pay claims for mailboxes or posts that were improperly installed or maintained, or that were damaged due to their inability to withstand the force of snow and ice coming off of a plow blade.

If a property owner believes their mailbox was directly hit by City equipment, they should report the damage within 7 days by calling the Public Works Department (821-8370) or entering it into the Request Tracker feature of the City web site. Reported information should include:

- Claimant name and address, and mailbox property address if different
- Date and time of damage (if known)
- Witnesses (if any)
- Receipts of expenses for repairs. If repairs cannot be made due to frost conditions, the Claimant should still report the damage within 7 days, but should then wait to make a submittal for reimbursement until the repairs have been made.

The Public Works Department will review the damaged mailbox and contact the Claimant with a determination of eligibility for reimbursement. The Director of Public Works or designated representative is authorized to use reasonable discretion in resolving disputes involving unusual circumstances.

Repairs of damage will be reimbursed to the Claimant up to a maximum of \$80. If requested by a Claimant, in spring the City will auger a hole for the new mailbox post.

Claimants are responsible for repairs such that the mailbox design and placement are in conformance with U.S. Postal Service standards. The USPS notes that:

- Subject to state laws and regulations, a curbside mailbox must be placed to allow safe and convenient delivery by carriers without leaving their vehicles.
- The supporting post is to be approved by the local post office. Though the postal service is silent on post materials, certain installations at the road edge may be considered by the City to be a safety hazard (generally massive or non-breakaway installations), and the City may order their removal. The Federal Highway Administration recommends a post no larger than 4"x4" wood or 2" diameter steel or aluminum pipe, buried no more than 24".
- The local postmaster may approve a curbside mailbox constructed by a customer who does not want to use an approved manufactured box. The custom-built box must generally meet the same standards as approved manufactured boxes for flag, size, strength, and quality of construction.
- The local post office has the final say in mailbox placement. Their former guidelines were:
 - 42" – 45" vertical height from the road surface to the bottom of mailbox.
 - 6" – 8" setback distance from the face of curb or edge of road shoulder to the front of mailbox. When open, the mailbox door should not extend past the face of curb or edge of road shoulder.