

Instructions and Requirements for Postal Mail Boxes on Public Right-Of-Ways

Below and on the overleaf is information with regards to the installation and maintenance of postal boxes along the right-of-way of our County Highways. The first section is an overview of the laws governing mailboxes and the second part is information on properly installing them adjacent to the right-of-way of the highway.

THE LAW

There is no statutory of legal authority which grants a property owner or resident along a public highway any rights to place a mailbox in a right-of-way. The owner may have an informal license, but this does not endow the owner of the mailbox with any legal rights in the highway when needed for highway purposes.

The Highway Superintendent and the State have a duty to keep the highway available for public use. Snow removal and snow storage are an incident of the use.

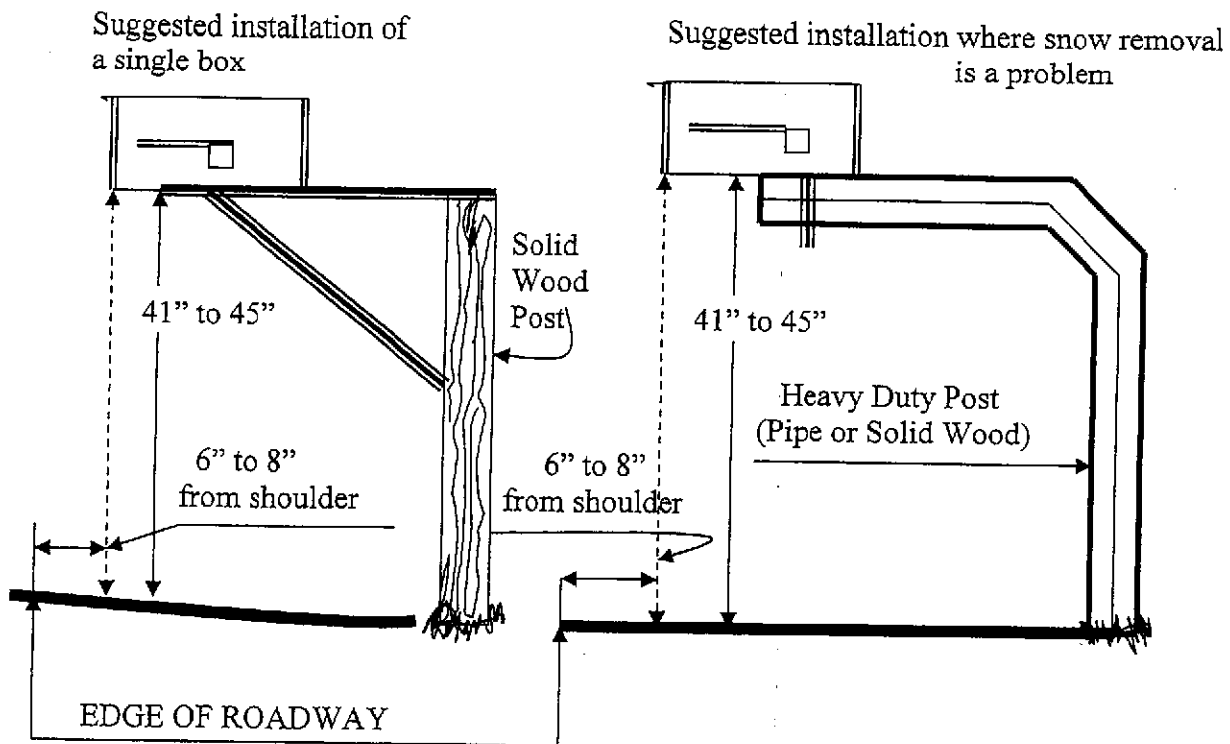
“The highways of the state are made for and devoted to public travel, and the whole public have the right to their use in their entirety and when obstructions to the public travel are found within their bounds, the commissioners of highways are clothed with power to remove them without waiting for the slow process of law, even though travel be not absolutely and entirely prevented.”

(Emphasis supplied) VAN WYCK v. LENT 33 Hun 301

When the necessity of keeping the highway open conflicts with the individual's receipt of the mail, the latter must stand aside. The owner might even be compelled to remove the box under Highway Law 319.

The owner has no right to interfere with the speedy and efficient removal of snow by placing the mailbox in such a position as to cause this result, and no liability results on the part of the public official charged with the duty of snow removal if such a box is so placed that it may be injured by proper highway maintenance.

(Informal opinion, Attorney General 2/28/66)



INSTALLATION DETAILS & INSTRUCTIONS
 (From United States Post Office)

Whenever possible, boxes must be located so that the carrier's vehicle is off the pavement when

Box Number (Columbia County 911 Address Number) must be displayed box in numbers not less than one inch high.

Post must be neat and of adequate strength and size.

Approach to box should be hard, level surface (gravel, cinders, stone)

Box must be placed to conform with state laws and highway regulations.