	RURAL MAILBOXES		<i>Issued: MAY 2005</i>
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RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	PART	ROADSIDE DEVELOPMENT	
	SECTION		
	SUB-SECTION		

General

Rural mailboxes serve to provide mail service to people living in rural areas and wanting mail delivered to their residence.

Rural mailbox placement immediately adjacent to the roadway, while efficient and convenient for mail delivery, can be a safety hazard for motorists.

Injury from striking a mailbox is not the only risk associated with mailboxes. Mail carrier maneuvers in collecting and delivering mail, along with patron activities, either as pedestrians or motorists, create opportunities for traffic conflict and human error. Reducing the number and severity of these conflicts is one of the objectives of this guideline.

Guidelines for Use

In general, single mailboxes are permitted to exist within the highway right-of-way provided they do not interfere with the travelling public or the function, maintenance, or operation of the roadway system.

The following guidelines and provisions should be used when installing mailboxes within the highway right-of-way:

- preferably, mailboxes should be installed along lower classes of roadways that provide shoulders to allow for safe stopping and mail delivery
- mailboxes should be installed along service or access roads, whenever possible, to minimize the interference

with the highway traffic

- no mailboxes are permitted along freeways or expressways
- no mailboxes are permitted along highways where access, stopping, or parking is prohibited by law or regulation
- no **multiple mailboxes or super boxes** are permitted to exist within the highway right-of-way.

Guidelines for Placement

Mailboxes should be placed for maximum convenience to the patron and the carrier, while still being consistent with safety considerations for highway traffic.

The following guidelines and provisions should be used when locating mailboxes along the highway:

- to receive mail delivery, rural residents they must locate their mailboxes on the right side of the highway, along the delivery route.
- the mailbox location should allow the mail delivery personnel to place the mail in the box without leaving their vehicle
- vehicles at the mailbox should have enough space to stop completely out of the flow of traffic. The higher the traffic volume or speed, the greater the clearance should be.
- When locating a mailbox along the highway, consideration should be given to:

- minimizing walking distance within the roadway for the patron, and
- ensuring adequate stopping sight distance in advance of the mailbox site.

The lateral placement of mailboxes must offer the mail carrier easy access to the box from the delivery vehicle, as well as the necessary clearance from the travelled way.

The roadside face of a mailbox should normally be located a distance of 0.3 metres from the edge of the road. Placing a mailbox closer to the edge may result in the mailbox being damaged during snowplowing operations.

Alternatively, mailboxes may be installed within an existing widened portion of a roadway. The widened area should be large enough to accommodate the mail delivery vehicle and allow the vehicle to park well clear of the normal shoulder line.

Where a mailbox is installed in the vicinity of an existing guardrail, it should be placed behind the guardrail whenever practical (i.e., with the use of a cantilever arm).

The mailbox should be mounted 1.0 to 1.2 metres above the mail stop surface.

For details on mailbox placement, please refer to the drawing TCS-D-910.

Structure of Mailboxes

Mailboxes should be constructed from sheet metal, plastic or similar weight materials. No concrete, masonry or other heavy or rigid mailbox support structures are allowed within the highway right-of-way.

A mailbox support should yield or collapse if struck, and should bend or fall away from the vehicle that strikes it. Colliding with a mailbox should not create severe deceleration for the errant vehicle.

A single 100 mm x 100 mm square or 100 mm diameter wooden post, or a metal post, with diameter not exceeding 50 mm, and embedded no more than 600 mm into the ground will be acceptable as a mailbox support.

Installation types which do not yield easily when hit by a vehicle can be extremely dangerous for motorists.

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.

Cantilever mailbox supports are advantageous during winter months. The snow can be plowed close to the mailbox without the snow bank from the plow pushing the support over. Using this support type, the face of the mailbox should follow the same location guidelines.

An acceptable mailbox installation design is shown on the attached TCS-D-910 standard plan.

Mailboxes should not be marked with reflective materials that can mislead or confuse road users.

Safety Issues

Persons installing mailboxes and retrieving/delivering mail must use safety precautions so as not to cause vehicle collisions.

All persons working near the highway should wear reflective vests and bright clothing.

If a vehicle is used during installation (for example to transport a mailbox), it must be parked so as to minimize the impact to the travelling public (preferably on an approach), as far as possible from the travel lanes, and have four-way hazard warning signals operating at all times.

When stopping or slowing down a vehicle, a delivery person or patron should keep as close as possible to the road edge.

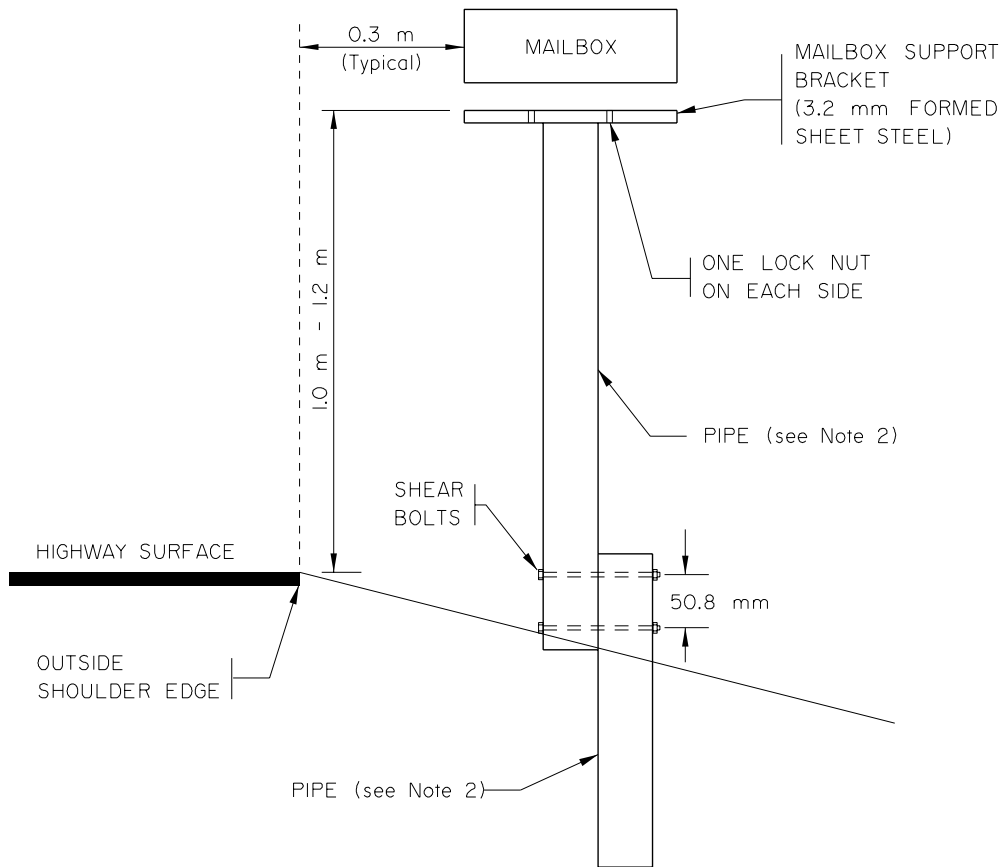
Mailboxes knocked down by snowplows or other maintenance equipment will be replaced by Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation as long as the mailbox was properly placed in accordance with the rural mailbox guidelines. With proper care when snowplowing, damage to mailboxes should seldom occur.

Unsafe Mailboxes

In situations where a mailbox is considered to be a safety hazard, the appropriate Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation district office will work with the mailbox owner to make the mailbox compliant with these guidelines.


For more information, contact the nearest Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation district office. A listing of the districts is provided at the following web site address:

<http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/Content/docType329/Production/distaddress.pdf>



NOTES:

1. The 0.3 metres horizontal offset should be maintained whenever possible. Placing the mailbox closer may result in a mailbox being damaged during snowplow operations.
2. The diameter of the metal post should not exceed 50 mm. A metal post shall be of a break-away type.
3. A single 100 mm x 100 mm square or 100 mm diameter wooden post and embedded no more than 600 mm into the ground will also be acceptable as a mailbox support.
4. Cantilever supports should be used wherever practical to avoid damage to the support during snowplow operations.

NO.	DESCRIPTION	BY	DATE
		DRAWING TCS-D-910	
		Date: MAY 2005	
PLACEMENT OF MAILBOXES			
Prepared By: S.L.	Checked By: B.B.	Scale: None	