

## **Mailbox Policy**

*Is your mailbox designed to stand up to the rigors of the winter plowing season?*

What happens if plowing activities damages your mailbox? The answer depends on how the damage occurred.

If your mailbox is actually struck by a City snow plow, the city will repair or replace the mailbox, providing it is a standard design that conforms to U.S. Post Office specifications for minimum height and setback. Damage to non-standard mailbox assemblies will be reimbursed \$25.00. Some examples of non-standard mailboxes include: brick mailboxes, mailboxes with custom lettering, custom designing or larger than standard installations.

Mailboxes should be installed and maintained to withstand snow coming off the end of the plow. Ensure that the face of your mailbox is at least 4 inches behind the back of the curb (out of the way of snow plows). If damage occurs due to snow and or ice discharge or snow storage, the city will not be responsible for repairs. The City Council approved this mailbox repair policy, essentially formalizing past practice regarding mailbox damaged by snow removal activities.

City staff investigates each complaint. If an inspection shows that the mailbox was hit by a plow or other piece of equipment, a temporary mailbox is installed. In the spring, repairs are made to conforming installation.

If no signs of impact are evident, the resident is provided information about possible reasons for the problem. These may include inadequate construction or materials, needed maintenance, or other sources of damage.

The City would like to remind all property owners that the plowing of snow is an imperfect process and certain inconveniences are unavoidable. The two most common complaints received by the City are damage to mailboxes and the plowing closed of previously cleared driveways. There are no remedies to these problems. City plows must operate at a minimum rate of speed in order to create enough momentum to remove snow from the road, therefore, windrows are unavoidable. Old, unsecured mailboxes are prone to damage because of the weight of the snow and ice. The City will not be responsible for improperly mounted or maintained mailboxes that are damaged by snow and/or ice.

## **Tips for Homeowners**

In order to avoid problems with your mailbox during the winter season, residents are encouraged to follow these guidelines:

- Make sure your mailbox conforms to postal and city standards. That means the bottom of the box is 48 inches above the street, and the mailbox is mounted so the door, when closed, does not extend beyond the back of the concrete curb.
- In general, avoid installation of paper boxes, flower planters, or other attachments beneath the mailbox. If you do install these items, be sure they are set back at least 10 inches from the front of the mailbox. The city will not be responsible for damage to these items from snow discharge.
- Conduct regular inspections and perform routine maintenance on your mailbox, just as you would for other areas of your property.
- Clear snow away from the mailbox area after each plowing. Snow that remains in front of the mailbox will get compacted and make subsequent plowing less effective.