

**Crow Wing County Policy on
INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF MAILBOX SUPPORTS
ON COUNTY ROADS AND COUNTY STATE AID HIGHWAYS**

Adopted by Crow Wing County Board of Commissioners – 09.22.09
Revised 5-27-14

It is the goal of Crow Wing County to provide public right-of-ways for the traveling public that are safe, efficient and are free of unnecessary hazards, while providing minimum inconvenience to property owners. Minnesota law declares certain mailbox installations to be a public nuisance, a road hazard, and a danger to the health and safety of the traveling public (Minnesota Rules Chapter 8818 – attached), and authorizes the road authority to remove and replace such a support (Statute 169.072 – attached).

I. Replacement of Mailbox Supports under County Highway Improvement Program

Crow Wing County will provide and install at the County's expense, conforming mailbox supports within the limits of all Crow Wing County highway reconstruction and highway resurfacing projects.

II. Replacement of Unlawful Mailbox Supports and Installations

Any mailbox support deemed unlawful as defined by Minnesota Rules Chapter 8818 (see attached), shall be replaced. Once a support is deemed unlawful, the owner will be notified in writing that the owner shall replace the support within 60 days. As an incentive to use approved supports the County provides the following options:

- (1) The owner may purchase a conforming support from the County at the current rate as shown on Exhibit A and install it as shown on Exhibit B. Owner must remove unlawful support.
- (2) The County will furnish and install an approved support at the current rate as shown on Exhibit A. Owner must remove unlawful support.
 - B. The mailbox support installation does NOT include a mailbox or affixing an existing mailbox to the installed mailbox support. Mailbox and/or newspaper box installation is the responsibility of the resident.

An unlawful support remaining after the expiration of the 60-day time period will be removed and replaced by the County at the owner's expense up to the maximum defined by statute to cover the costs incurred.

III. Replacement of Damaged Mailbox Supports by Crow Wing County

The County will replace all lawful mailbox supports damaged by County equipment making contact with the support during snowplowing operations or other maintenance activities provided the support was properly installed according to the U.S. Postal and County standards. The County will not replace supports damaged by third parties, snow thrown from plows during snowplow operations, or acts of Mother Nature.

IV. Mailbox Support Requirements part of Access Permits

The Crow Wing County Highway Department will require that all mailbox supports associated with the issuance of an access permit be constructed in accordance with the Department's specifications for lawful supports. The property owner will pay for the cost of the support. The County will furnish and install an approved support for the fee currently in effect (see Exhibit A). The owner may opt to purchase the support from the County at the current rate (see Exhibit A) and install it as shown in Exhibit B.

V. Miscellaneous Attachments to Mailbox Supports

Newspaper delivery boxes, advertisement delivery boxes, nameplates, address plates, etc. shall not be installed underneath the mailbox, whether attached to the mailbox support or on a separate post. The area underneath the mailbox shall remain free of obstructions in order to allow the unhindered passage of the snowplow wing blade. Obstacles interfering with the wing blade force the plow to swerve, often into the oncoming lane, creating an unsafe situation for motorists and plow operators. Newspaper delivery boxes should be installed to the left of the mailbox with a bracket instead of on a separate post.

VI. Ownership of Mailbox Supports

Mailboxes and mailbox supports are the property of the mail route patron. Crow Wing County does not issue written permits for the placement of mailboxes within the road right-of-way, nor do our easements provide for mailbox construction. All mailboxes placed within the road right-of-way are placed there at the owner's risk. Replacement or installation of mailbox supports by the County does not signify any change of ownership. The support remains the property of the owner and it is the owner's responsibility to maintain to conformance standards.

VII. Interruption of Mail Delivery

When the County must remove and replace a mailbox support, it shall be done in such a manner as to cause no interruption of mail delivery if at all possible.

VIII. Spacing of Mailbox Supports

In accordance with Minnesota Rules Chapter 8818 (see attached), mailbox supports shall be spaced no closer than 30 inches.

IX. Call Before You Dig (Gopher State One Call)

48 hours prior to installation of any new mailbox support, contact the Gopher State One Call for utility locates (1-800-252-1166)

X. Desired Mailbox Location

The US Postal System prefers that mailbox supports are placed before the residence's entrance so that traffic does not need to back up against traffic to turn into the entrance.

XI. The most common nonconforming mailbox supports are: wood supports greater than a 4" x 4" square or 4 1/2" in diameter, metal posts greater than 2" in diameter, multiple mailboxes on one support, poor mailbox or support condition, the mailbox is less than 42" from the bottom of the mailbox to the ground, supports set in concrete, items placed underneath the mailbox, and mailboxes placed too close to the edge of the road.

169.072 UNAUTHORIZED MAILBOX INSTALLATION.

Subdivision 1. Public hazard. A mailbox installation or support on a public highway that does not meet the breakaway and location standards contained in rules adopted under subdivision 2 is declared to be a public nuisance, a road hazard, and a danger to the health and safety of the traveling public.

Subd. 2. Standards; rulemaking. The commissioner shall by January 1, 1993, adopt rules that provide for standards and permissible locations of mailbox installations and supports on a street or highway. The commissioner shall base the rules substantially on federal highway administration regulations or recommendations, or other national standards or recommendations regarding the location and construction of safe, breakaway mailbox installations or supports. In adopting the rules, the commissioner shall consider the safety of the traveling public relative to the convenience and expense of owners of nonconforming mailbox installations or supports. The commissioner may provide for alternative standards to allow variances from the rules.

Subd. 3. Removal, notice. (a) After adoption of the rules authorized under subdivision 2, the commissioner or a road authority as defined in section 160.02, subdivision 25, may remove and replace a mailbox installation or support that is (1) located on a street or highway under the jurisdiction of the commissioner or road authority, and (2) does not conform to the rules adopted under subdivision 2. The commissioner or road authority may remove and replace a nonconforming mailbox installation or support not less than 60 days after giving notice, by personal notice or certified mail to the owner or the resident at the address served by the mailbox, of its intent to remove and replace the installation or support. The commissioner or road authority may charge the owner or resident not more than \$75 for the cost of the removal and replacement.

(b) The notice must at a minimum:

- (1) inform the owner of the nonconforming installation or support;
- (2) inform the owner or resident of the applicable law and rules, including the rules that contain the standards for mailbox installations and supports on public streets and highways;
- (3) inform the owner or resident that the owner or resident must remove the installation or support or bring it into compliance with the rules within 60 days of the date of the notice;
- (4) inform the owner or resident of the applicable laws and rules and the standards for mailbox installations and supports on public streets and highways, and provide plans or diagrams of examples of conforming installations or supports;
- (5) inform the owner or resident that if the nonconforming installation or support is not removed or replaced within 60 days of the date of the notice, the commissioner or road authority may remove and replace the installation or support at a cost of up to \$75 to the owner or resident; and
- (6) inform the owner or resident that where the replacement is made in conjunction with certain federally aided highway construction projects the replacement may be made at partial or no cost to the owner or resident.

History: 1991 c 339 s