

# Town of Durham

## Policy on Damage to Mailboxes by Plowing Operations

All our plow operators are urged to take precautions to avoid hitting mailbox posts. However, experience has shown that during a storm it is not always possible for a driver to see a post in time to avoid striking it with the plow. The State of Maine law views mailboxes as an encroachment in the public way put there at the owner's risk and municipalities are not legally liable for any damage or repairs to mailboxes due to plowing operations.

In the event your mailbox is damaged by the Town plow we ask you contact Public Works at 207-353-3281 within 7 days before you make any needed temporary repairs. If you are unable to make temporary repairs, we will attempt to put the mailbox in working condition within 48-72 hours as time allows. It may be necessary to set the mailbox post in a bucket until the ground thaws. Substantially damaged property will be replaced in the spring with a basic metal mailbox and a 4 by 4 inch wooden post. Newspaper boxes will not be repaired or reset by the Town in any event. The Town may reimburse the resident for replacement of a mailbox up to a maximum of \$35. Receipts are required.

The Town will not replace or reimburse for custom made mailboxes, ornate posts or granite posts, or any equipment beyond basic standard issue. The Town will not replace or reimburse for existing mailboxes with rotted posts or in obvious poor existing condition or for claims made beyond the 7 (seven) day notification window.

### Mailbox Location and Construction Information

Some tips on placement of mailboxes that may help to minimize the chance of damage:

- Place reflective material on the side of the box visible to approaching traffic; also, affix 4" high letters to identify the address to assist emergency vehicles.
- Mailbox post size must not exceed 4" by 4" for a wooden post or 2" diameter for a steel pipe post for roadside barrier safety. Posts that are more substantial in construction are considered "deadly fixed objects" and are not permitted within the Town Way.
- For uncurbed roadways set the front of the mailbox at the far edge of the road shoulder to provide the maximum possible roadway clearance. For curbed roads the face of the mailbox should be 8-12 inches back from the curb face.
- Mailboxes should be installed at least 42 inches high to provide clearance for the plow wing. We recommend the use of an extended arm type of post with a free swinging suspended mailbox. This allows snowplows to sweep near or under boxes without damage to supports and provides easy access to the boxes by carrier and owners.
- Snow in areas around the mailbox should be completely removed.

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Date: November 3, 2015

Selectmen:

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Jeffrey Wakeman, Chair

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s/ \_\_\_\_\_  
Sarah Hall, Vice Chair

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s/ \_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Blake

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Joshua Libby

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Michael Stewart