

## Mailbox Improvement Week

Each year, the Postal Service designates the third full week of May as Mailbox Improvement Week to encourage customers on city motorized, rural, or highway contract box delivery routes to examine and, where necessary, improve the appearance of their mailboxes. Neat, attractive mailboxes make a significant contribution to the appearance of the countryside and to streets in suburban areas. Mailbox Improvement Week calls attention to the need for providing mailboxes that are:

1. Approved by the postmaster general.
2. Safe to use.
3. Conveniently located.
4. Neat in appearance.

Mailboxes that meet these 4 important requirements help delivery and collection operations and improve service to the entire route. Neat and attractive mailboxes also enhance the appearance of the countryside and suburban streets.

Some of the typical activities that may be necessary include:

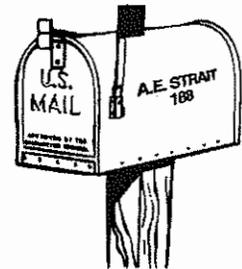
1. Replacing loose hinges on a mailbox door.
2. Repainting a mailbox that may have rusted or started to peel.
3. Remounting a mailbox post that may have become loose.
4. Replacing or adding house numbers.

Approved traditional or contemporary curbside mailboxes are required whenever a mailbox is newly installed or replaced. However, a custom-built curbside mailbox may be used if the postmaster gives prior approval and if the mailbox conforms generally to the same requirements as approved manufactured curbside mailboxes. A mailbox should display the street name and house number or, if house numbers are not authorized, the assigned box number on the side of a single mailbox or on the doors of grouped mailboxes visible to the approaching carrier. The street name, box number, and/or any other address information must be inscribed in contrasting color in neat letters and numerals not less than 1 inch in height. Customers are encouraged to group mailboxes whenever practical, especially where many mailboxes are located at or near crossroads, service turnouts, or similar locations. If the mailbox is on a street other than the one on which the customer resides, the street name and house number must be on the mailbox. It is generally in the customers' best interest to display their address on both sides of the box. Police, fire, and rescue personnel often depend on mailbox information to locate people, and they may approach from a different direction than the carrier. In all instances, placing the owner's name on the box is optional.

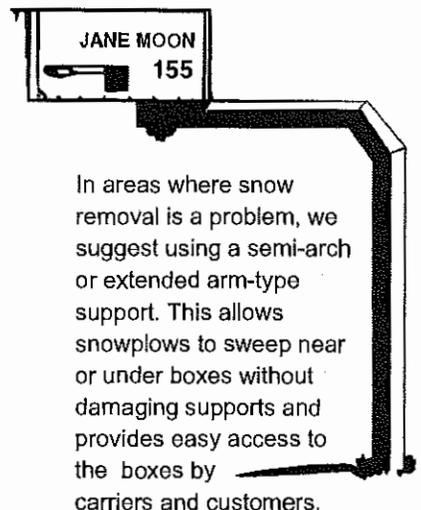
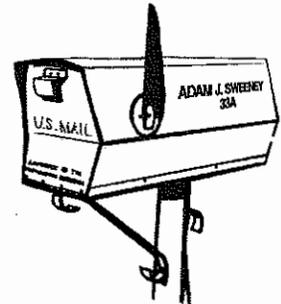
Generally, customers should install mailboxes with the bottom of the mailbox at a vertical height of between 3 1/2 to 4 feet from the road surface. However, because of varying road and curb conditions and other factors, the Postal Service recommends that customers contact the postmaster or carrier before erecting or replacing mailboxes and supports.

The curbside mailbox must be on the right-hand side of the road in the carrier's travel direction in all cases where traffic conditions make it dangerous for the carrier to drive to the left to reach the mailboxes, or where doing so would constitute a violation of federal, state, or local traffic laws and regulations. Mailboxes should be placed so the carrier can safely and conveniently serve them without leaving the vehicle. Carriers are subject to the same traffic laws and regulations as other motorists. Customers must remove

**Traditional**  
(three standard sizes)



**Contemporary**



In areas where snow removal is a problem, we suggest using a semi-arch or extended arm-type support. This allows snowplows to sweep near or under boxes without damaging supports and provides easy access to the boxes by carriers and customers.

obstructions, including vehicles, trash cans, and snow, that impede efficient delivery. Except when a mailbox is temporarily blocked, carriers must have access to the mailbox without leaving the vehicle.

The U.S. Postal Service does not approve support posts. In addition, the Postal Service does not regulate mounting of mailboxes for purposes of traffic safety. Please note that mailbox posts are often subject to local restrictions, state laws, and federal highway regulations. Some states have enacted laws that are more stringent and specific about the type of mailbox that may be used, the post or support that must be used to mount the mailbox, and the location of the delivery equipment. For further information on authorized post and support mountings, customers should contract either of the following:

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE HIGHWAY  
AND TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS  
444 N CAPITOL STREET NW SUITE 249  
WASHINGTON DC 200011-1512

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY HHS 10  
400 7<sup>TH</sup> STREET SW  
WASHINGTON DC 20590-0003

Your participation in Mailbox Improvement Week will be greatly appreciated by your carrier and the Postal Service.

**POSTMASTER**

Notice 209, November 2000

**RURAL CUSTOMER LOCAL**

First-Class Mail  
Postage & Fees Paid  
USPS  
Permit No. G-10

**UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE** 