



Office of
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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MAILBOX POLICY

The Department of Public Works' implementation of the below mailbox policy is with specific regards to the repair(s)/replacement of residential mailbox damage(s) as a result of snow plowing equipment during winter season. The Town of Belchertown will only be responsible to repair/replace damaged property having been in actual contact with snow removal equipment if it is on private property.

COMPLAINTS

All complaints will be investigated by the Director of the Department of Public Works or his Designee, in order to determine if the damage was the cause of a direct hit by a town operated vehicle.

DAMAGE TO PRIVATE PROPERTY

The Town of Belchertown is NOT held responsible for damage to private property located within the public right of way. The right of way (ROW) is often much wider than the pavement and is often confused by property owners as their own property. In most cases, the ROW extends 10'-15' beyond the edge of the paved or gravel road. Most owners maintain this area, place mailboxes in these areas, which improve the appearance of the street, but are obstructive to good maintenance from being conducted on the roadway.

The snow window must be pushed back as far as possible for many reasons, some of which include:

1. traffic safety
2. future snow being plowed
3. opening of storm drains and curb lines for proper drainage of melting snow
4. to allow for maximum visibility for drivers from all roads

Mailboxes located within ROW limits exist by *sufferance only*, with the responsibility assumed by the homeowner. It is not possible for the town to replace or repair any type of structure erected by an abutting landowner within the ROW that has been damaged as a result of highway maintenance or construction work. In the event of personal property damage, the Town of Belchertown will only be responsible to repair/replace damaged mailboxes having been in actual contact with the snow removal equipment if it is on private property, and not within the public right of way.

CLAIM/CLAIM QUESTIONNAIRE

All mailbox damage complaints will be addressed in the order they are received. Requests are to be submitted in writing by the form entitled "**Claim Questionnaire for Mailbox Damage.**" This form must be completed in full by the resident and/or property owner.

CLAIM NOTIFICATION OF DAMAGES

ALL claims will be handled in the following manner and in the order they are received.

1. Claims must be made within 72 hours of storm event. A “Claim Questionnaire for Mailbox Damage” Form is available for print on the Town of Belchertown’s DPW website or can be obtained in person at DPW Highway Garage, 290 Jackson Street. This form must be completed and returned in order to have your request acknowledged.
2. Upon return of the “Claim Questionnaire for Mailbox Damage”, determination of damage(s) and notification will be made within 10 days of the date the claim was filed, for repair(s)/replacement as needed. Once a determination is made, a work order will be issued to the DPW Maintenance Division to proceed.
3. Due to frozen ground conditions, work may commence in the Spring or at earliest winter thawing ground conditions, determined by the Director of the Department of Public Works or his designee.

MAILBOX REPLACEMENT SPECIFICATIONS

All Mailbox replacements will be regulated by the Department of Public Works, and per the approval of the Director.

Option 1:

Residents may opt to conduct repairs/replacements on their own (proof of purchase(s)/and receipts must be provided).The Department will provide reimbursement, as per costs stated on the claim form, in the amount not to exceed fifty-dollars \$50.00.

Option 2:

The Department will repair/replace damaged mailbox of the following types and specification. Replacement will consist of a **standard generic metal (plastic depending upon availability) no ornate or specialty boxes.**

Post Mount Rural Mailbox-(black)

Each mailbox shall consist of a Post Mount Rural Mailbox constructed from galvanized steel for durability, and U.S. Postmaster General approved. Mailbox shall be of standard-sized design with approximate specifications:

Depth: 20 inches x Height: 9 inches x Width: 7 inches, (20” x 9” x 7”).

Pressure Treated Post-

Each mailbox post shall be 4 inches x 4 inches, (4” x 4”). Lumber is pressure treated in order to protect it from termites, fungal decay and rot. Post installation shall be non-cemented into the ground.

Letters & Numbering-

The Department of Public Works is not responsible for residential numbering or lettering upon the mailbox. Residents are required to re-affix, at their own expense, any/all lettering and numbers, as per postal service requirements listed below, after the departments new mailbox installation.

POSTAL CURBSIDE MAILBOX REGULATIONS

All homeowners must keep the area around their mailboxes clear of anything that will not obstruct the safe delivery of mail. If the United States Postal Service employee cannot safely reach in and deliver the mail, the postmaster may withdraw delivery to that mailbox.

Any curbside mailbox which is to be installed at the edge of the roadway or curbside of the street and allowed it to be served by a mail carrier from a vehicle in any city route, rural route or highway must be approved by the United States Postal Service.

Every curbside mailbox should display the homeowners name and address assigned by the local authorities on the flag side of the mailbox. The number and letters must be at least one inch high and in contrasting color in neat, legible letters. If the boxes are grouped and the address cannot be placed on the flag side of the mailbox, then the house number should be inscribed on the door. No advertising of any kind can be placed on the mailbox or the mailbox post.