

Town of Volney Mailbox Repair Policy



The Town of Volney Highway Department will repair or replace well maintained mailboxes or posts damaged **only** by direct contact with the plow and if installed per the US Postal Service regulations (below). Mailboxes and posts will **not** be replaced if damaged by snow or ice being discharged by the snowplow. It is the responsibility of the owner of the mailbox to clear the snow around the mailbox to assure mail delivery by the US Postal Service.

Owners of the mailbox and post shall fill out a Mailbox Damage Report in the Town Clerk's Office within 48 hours of the incident. The Highway Superintendent or Designee will inspect the damage and make a determination to replace or deny the request. Replacements will be done as soon as possible and weather permitting.

In the event the mailbox meets the criteria in the opinion of the Highway Superintendent or their designee, the Town Highway Department will make necessary repairs as follows:

- A basic standard size steel mailbox will be provided
- A standard 4" x 4" post and support will be used in any repair or replacement

Mailbox Laws and Regulations

According to Section 319 of the New York State Highway Law, mailboxes are considered highway obstructions and are only "allowed" in the right-of-way as a convenience to the owner as it is understood they are required for mail delivery.

The NYS traffic laws require the Highway Departments to keep a minimum two 15 foot lanes clear of obstructions for the motoring public. This is a minimum total width of 30 feet, roadway and shoulder.

Mailbox Installation

Per USPS the face of the mailbox should be a minimum of 16 feet from the center line of the roadway and always at least 6 inches off any asphalt edge or shoulder edge.

The design of the snow plow with a wing is so that it plows a 15 foot wide path in one pass, at its narrowest setting. The NYS Traffic Laws do not allow anyone to cross the centerline of the roadway, therefore, anything within 15 feet of the center of the road will most likely get hit.

The mailbox and its support arm should have a minimum of 48 inches of clear space under it and at least 2 feet back to the post from the face of the mailbox to allow the snow plow wing to pass under the mailbox and its arm, a snowplow wing is 46 inches, you must take in to consideration snow and ice buildup when calculating your minimum clear space.

The mailbox post and box must be strong enough to stand up to heavy snow coming off the plow, but also must bend or fall away if a car hits them.

Mailbox Responsibility

It is understood that mailboxes must be placed in the highway right-of-way; however that does **not** grant homeowners any legal rights in the highway when needed for highway purposes. The Attorney General, on February 28, 1966, stated “When the necessity of keeping the highway open conflicts with an individual’s reception of the mail, the later must stand aside”.

The best way to protect your mailbox is to ensure it is properly attached to the post and to keep the mailbox assembly simple, and limit the impact surface area from plowed snow. The Highway Department recommends that homeowners check their mailboxes periodically.

Homeowners should consider replacing their decorator mailboxes with standard mailboxes during the winter months.