



MEMORANDUM

To: Public Works Committee

Through: Carl S. Goldsmith, Director of Public Works

From: David P. Gorman, PE, Asst. Director of Public Works

Date: October 9, 2008

Subject: Proposed Policy for Mailbox Replacement Impacted by Snow Removal Operations

The Village does not currently have a formal policy for replacing mailboxes that are damaged or destroyed during snow removal operations. Presently, Public Works installs a temporary mailbox and/or post when either is damaged or knocked down during snow removal operations. Public Works installs permanent replacements at the end of winter. Staff requests that the Public Works Committee recommend a policy to the Village Board of Trustees.

Background:

Public Works typically damages 100 mailboxes each winter. Investigations have determined that many of the mailboxes that were damaged or destroyed had been improperly installed, meaning that they were not installed in accordance with Village Code and Postal Regulations. Many of the mailboxes are too close to the curb or hang over the curb so they are either hit by the plow or pushed over by plowed snow.

Village Ordinance No. 5146 directed residents to bring all non-conforming mailboxes into compliance by Nov 15, 2002. A survey of all street-side mailboxes was supposed to have been completed by that time. However, such a survey was not completed until the summer of 2008.

An increasing number of residents are installing ornate mailboxes, increasing the difficulty of obtaining replacements that meet resident approval. Additionally, many days are required to purchase, assemble and install the new mailboxes during the busy period when the Department is transitioning from winter to spring.

Survey:

Staff measured mailboxes this Summer and determined that a total of 2,237 mailboxes were not in compliance with United States Postal Services Standards. There were 309 that were either too close to or over the curb. Another 8 were structural. A letter will be sent to these residents advising them to modify their mailboxes by the first snowfall. Structural mailboxes are prohibited by Village Code so those owners will be given adequate time to remove those mailboxes. Staff will provide the attached presentation at the meeting on October 14th.

Draft Policy:

Staff proposes a policy that reimburses residents with properly installed mailboxes for the cost of materials associated with replacing a basic mailbox. When notified by a resident, staff will

install a temporary mailbox within 24 hours after the end of the storm. The Village will reimburse residents with properly installed mailboxes for the cost of materials for a basic wooden post and metal mailbox. The resident may install a more decorative type but the reimbursement amount will be a set amount based on the basic type. The temporary mailbox would be returned to the Village before the reimbursement is made. Mailboxes that clearly did not meet Post Office and Village installation standards will not be reimbursed. Letters would be mailed to the owners of the non-conforming mailboxes this Fall to document and advise that those mailboxes must be adjusted or replaced per the regulations.

Recommendation:

Staff requests that the Committee recommend the proposed policy to the Village Board of Trustees. Staff prefers that the Board would pass this policy on November 6th so that homeowners may have sufficient time to adjust mailbox posts prior to the ground freezing.

DG:dg Policy Proposal Mail Boxes

attachments: draft policy and mailbox presentation

cc: David Hulseberg, Village Manager
Keith Surges, Operations Superintendent
Angela Podesta, Utilities Superintendent

DRAFT

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD

VILLAGE BOARD POLICY MEMORANDUM

Subject: Replacement of mailboxes due to snow plow damage.

Number: 09-__

Date: __ - __ - __

I. Purpose

To establish a Village policy for the replacement of mailboxes knocked down or damaged by the Village during snow removal operations.

II. Procedures/Guidelines

- A. Public Works will replace a mailbox damaged by a snow plow or plowed snow and install a temporary mailbox on the first business day after plowing operations have ended.
- B. The Village will reimburse a resident for the cost of materials to install a basic wooden post and metal mailbox provided that the mailbox was originally installed per Village Code Title 9, Chapter 97, Section 97.010. The cost of materials will be determined each winter by pricing materials at a local home improvement store.
- C. The Village will only reimburse a resident when the mailbox was installed per Village Code. In particular, the mailbox must not protrude within 6 inches of the face of the curb or over the curb. The Department of Public Works will maintain a list of residents whose boxes are located too close to the curb.
- D. The Department of Public Works shall send an advisory letter to each resident found to have a nonconforming mailbox in the Summer 2008 mailbox survey.

III. Legislation/Documentation

- 1. USPA Regulations
- 2. Village of Lombard Ordinance No. 5146

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 9, CHAPTERS 94 AND 97 OF THE LOMBARD VILLAGE CODE IN REGARD TO MAILBOXES IN THE RIGHT-OF-WAY

BE IT ORDAINED by the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Lombard, DuPage County, Illinois, as follows:

SECTION 1: That Title 9, Chapter 94, Section 94.05(A), of the Lombard Village Code is amended to read in its entirety as follows:

(A) to place, cause, or permit any tangible item to be placed upon or permitted to remain upon any parkway within the Village, except for the purpose of being picked up by a regularly scheduled scavenger service or as otherwise authorized in §97.005, §97.010, §119.20, §153.233, §153.239, or other provisions of this Code; or to allow or permit the placement of items for pickup by scavenger service upon any parkway sooner than 12 hours before the regularly scheduled day for pickup; or to allow or permit containers or other tangible items to remain upon any parkway beyond 12 hours following the regularly scheduled day for pickup.

SECTION 2: That Title 9, Chapter 97, Section 97.010 of the Lombard Village Code is amended by adding a new subsection (C) thereto which shall read in its entirety as follows:

(C) United States Postal Service approved mailboxes are permitted within the parkway area only under the following conditions:

- (1) The front face of the mailbox, once mounted, shall be six inches (6") to eight inches (8") from the back of the curb, or if no curb is present, from the road pavement, unless otherwise approved by the Postmaster due to road and/or curb conditions.
- (2) The distance from grade to the bottom surface of the mailbox shall be forty-one inches (41") to forty-five inches (45"), unless otherwise approved by the Postmaster due to road and/or curb conditions.
- (3) Mailbox and mailbox mounting structures shall provide a breakaway feature, as recommended by the Federal Highway Administration and the United States Postal Service, as follows:
 - (a) The mailbox shall be mounted on a mounting structure of the following sizes and materials and no others:
 - 1) A wood or plastic post of which the area of an average cross section may not be more than sixteen (16) square inches.
 - 2) A metal post not more than two inches (2") in diameter.
 - (b) Permitted mounting structures shall be affixed as follows:
 - 1) A wood or plastic post shall be embedded in crushed stone in a twelve inch (12") diameter hole to a depth of thirty six inches (36") below grade.

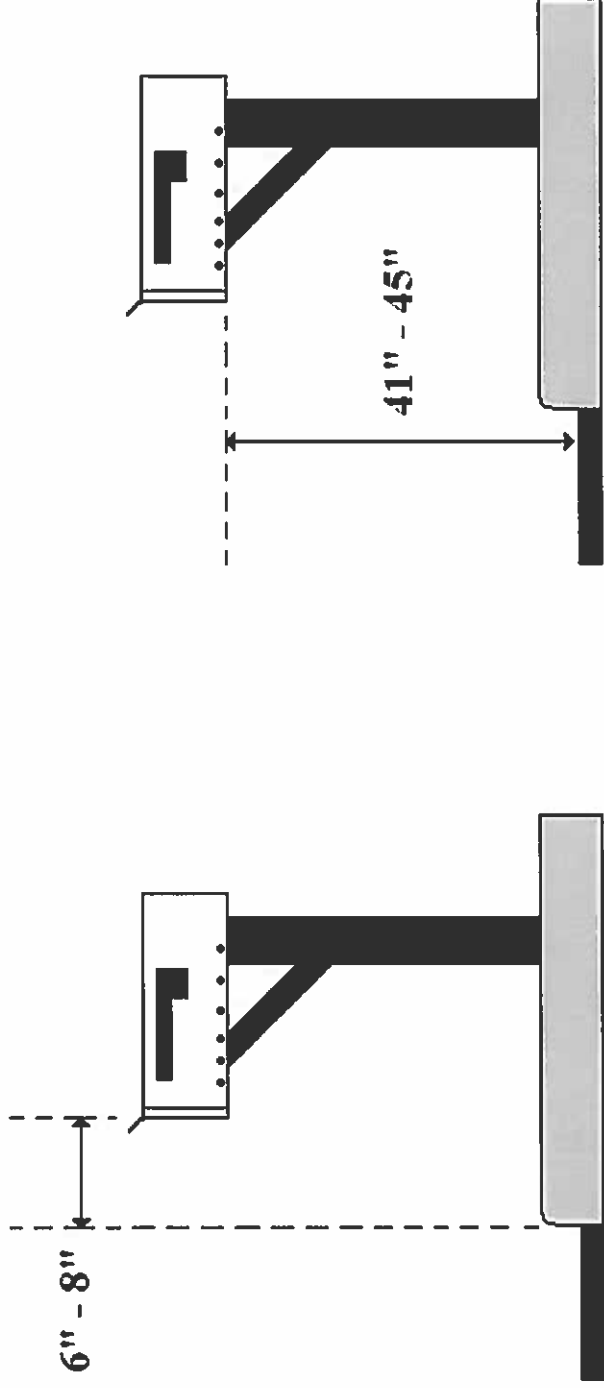
Village Wide Mailbox Inspection



Executive Summary

- Total Mailboxes found not in compliance with United States Postal Service Standards: 2,237
- Total Mailboxes that pose a potential hazard/liability issue to the Village/
Public Works Operations: 317
 - Mailboxes found not in compliance due to location : 309
 - Mailboxes found to be Structural mailboxes: 8

Postal Service Guidelines



- The United States Postal Service Guidelines were used in this inspection. The mailboxes identified as violators by the Public Works Department were those not in compliance with the USPS guide lines. These mailboxes were located too close to the roadway or too low off of the flow line of the curb. Structural mailboxes were also recorded as violators.

Violations due to Location



These Violations were defined as mailboxes that were found to be lower or closer to the curb than allowed by USPS standards. Mailboxes in these locations can prove hazardous to vehicles when they infringe on the roadway. Public Works recorded mailboxes leaning up to six inches into the roadway.

Structural Mailboxes



Public Works also classified all mailboxes deemed “Structural” as violations. This is defined as any mailbox which contained substantial permanent structural elements, including heavy brick planters at the base.

(This is a sample of the violation Notice that will be sent to residents)

Mailbox Inspection Form

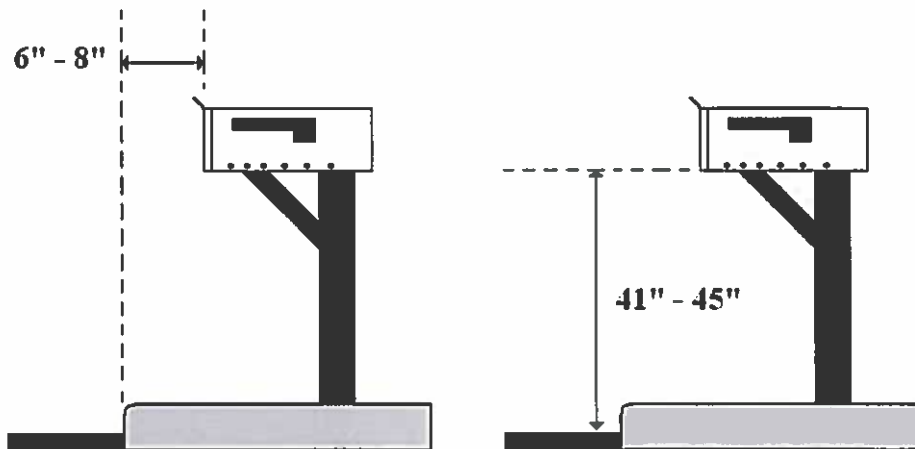
Address:	322 W. Morris Ave.
Inspection Date:	



Measured Offset from Front Face of Curb:	0 in.
Measured Height from Pavement:	41 in.

Note:

Your mailbox was found to be in violation of the U.S. Postal Service standards. Please make the necessary adjustments to comply with the standards shown below.



U.S. Postal Service Mailbox Standards