



Highway Maintenance Manual
Chapter 07 Roadside Management
Section 01 General
Subject 30 Hazardous Mailboxes

Bureau of Highway Maintenance
October 2024

1.0 General

A hazardous mailbox, newspaper tube or support is constructed in a manner presenting an unnecessary risk of death, injury and/or serious vehicular damage to the traveling public. Wisconsin Transportation Bulletin No. 14, "[Mailbox Safety](#)"*, gives examples of such roadside hazards. Regional maintenance personnel should be alert for such installations so that the hazard can be removed.

*(Link provided. Issued by Transportation Information Center, UW-Madison, 432 N. Lake St. Madison, WI 53706. Phone: 800-422-4615)

2.0 Procedure for Removing Hazardous Mailbox Installations

1. When in the judgment of regional maintenance personnel a hazardous condition exists, verbal contact should be made with the owner of the mailbox. It is desirable this contact be made in person. The reasons why the mailbox should be of mutual concern should be discussed, and the owner should be given a copy of the "Mailbox Safety" bulletin and/or other pertinent information.

An attempt should be made to convince the mailbox owner of the benefit of removing an obstacle which can cause death, injury, and/or serious vehicular damage. When verbal contact is made by telephone, information (business card and brochure) should be mailed to the owner.

This verbal contact should set a date, about one month in the future, for the owner to have the hazardous situation corrected. Requesting owners to remove supports during periods when the ground is frozen should be avoided. The contact should be documented, as this will provide information for the next step.

2. State or county maintenance personnel should review the removal status of the hazardous installation shortly after the removal date has passed.
3. If the hazard has not been removed, a certified letter like the one attached to this policy should be sent. A copy of the letter should also be sent to the appropriate postmaster. This letter requests the owner remove the hazardous mailbox or installation within 30 days.
4. If the previous steps do not work, county forces should remove the hazardous mailbox installation as an unpermitted encroachment under section [86.04](#) of the state statutes. The mailbox and support should be moved to the county shop for storage. The owner may reclaim these during the next 60 days by paying the actual removal costs. After 60 days, the materials may be disposed of.

3.0 Policy for Mailbox Installation

The owner is responsible for installing the new mailbox in accordance with [Bulletin No. 14, Mailbox Safety](#).

4.0 Mailboxes Damaged by Snowplows

See Winter Operations HMM 06-15-45, Mailboxes.

CERTIFIED MAIL

(DATE)

(NAME AND ADDRESS)

Dear (NAME):

Subject: Hazardous Mailbox Installation
(USH/STH) XXX, XXXXX County

Mailboxes installed close to traffic lanes can be struck by vehicles which inadvertently run off the road. Therefore, the support and box should be constructed in a manner that does not present an unnecessary risk of death, injury, or serious vehicle damage. Your mailbox (please see photograph enclosed) has the potential to be hazardous to motor vehicle users, including yourself and your neighbors. The enclosures with this letter include information on acceptable mailbox installations.

(Name) of (this office/the XXXXX County Highway Department) contacted you on XXXXX, 20XX to request that you remove this hazard. The hazard remains.

This letter is notice your mailbox should be removed and replaced with an acceptable installation within 30 days of the date of this letter. If the mailbox is not removed by that date, action will be taken to have it removed. Such action could include removal by forces acting for this Department, pursuing an order for removal under Wisconsin Statute 86.04, or referring the matter to the district attorney for action for penalty under other applicable statute or ordinance. A copy of Statute 86.04 is enclosed.

Your cooperation in removing and replacing the hazardous mailbox within 30 days is appreciated. If you have questions regarding this matter, including proper installation or location, please contact me at (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,

(NAME)

Maintenance Supervisor

Enclosures: Photograph

Bulletin, "Mailbox Safety" (three pages)

State Statute 86.04

cc: (NAME) Postmaster/Postmistress, with attachments except photograph
(NAME) County Highway Commissioner, with attachments except photograph