

Greenville, NY Highway Department

Mailboxes Damaged During Snow Removal

During and after significant snow storms, the Highway Department, in the course of plowing, receives phone calls regarding damage to mailboxes, either from snow plows directly or from the force of snow being thrown by the plows. If such damage is indeed caused by snow removal, It is not done intentionally but is an unfortunate consequence of snow removal.

As far as the Highway Department replacing damaged mailboxes, it must be pointed out that there is no statutory or legal authority which grants a property owner or resident along a public highway any right to place a mailbox in a highway right-of-way. That the mailbox is on town, county or state right-of-way is a courtesy to the postal service. Thus, when the necessity of keeping highways open, conflicts with the individuals reception of the mail, the latter must stand aside. The owner might even be compelled to remove the box under Highway Law #319.

From past experience, we have found that plastic mail boxes do not withstand the abuse of snow from the plows hitting them and are not recommended. Please check your mailbox for possible repairs. If your mailbox is damaged because of a rotten post or rusted box, the town will not repair it. We will not replace any fancy mailbox or box. Mailbox posts with fancy supports are not recommended as they stick down under the box and give the wing plow something to catch. A standard metal mailbox mounted directly on top of a treated 4x4 post placed 41"-45" high to the bottom of the mailbox is the most cost effective and best solution to maintaining your mailbox during the winter. If your mailbox is knocked down during the winter, we recommend the temporary use of a 4x4 wooden post and a metal mailbox cemented into a 5 gallon bucket. This will allow movement of the mailbox out of the town right of way during inclement weather.

According to Section 177-8 of the Town Code, it states:

§ 177-8_Injurious materials.

No person shall throw or deposit upon any highway any glass bottle, glass, nails, tacks, wire, cans, snow or other substance likely to injure any person, animal or vehicle upon such highway.

Penalties for offenses.

A violation of the provisions of this article shall be punishable by a fine not to exceed \$250 and/or a requirement to perform services for a public or not-for-profit corporation, association, institution or agency not to exceed eight hours, and for any second or subsequent violation by a fine not to exceed \$500 and/or a requirement to perform services for a public or not-for-profit corporation, association, institution or agency not to exceed eight hours.