



# Illinois Department of Transportation

## Memorandum

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To:	Studies and Plans Squads	PPM 40-10
From:	James M. Sullivan	Revised: Tim Brandenburg
Subject:	Mailbox Supports	
Date:	June 7, 1999	Revision Date: April 16, 2004

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### PLAN PREPARATION MEMORANDUM 40-10

#### BACKGROUND

This memorandum revises Plan Preparation Memorandum 99-214.P, Mailbox Supports, dated June 7, 1999 and supplements Chapters 12, 49, and 58-5 of the BDE Manual and applicable Highway Standards in providing uniformity of District preference concerning requirements of Mailbox Supports.

#### PROCEDURE

Hazardous mailboxes shall be identified on 3R or reconstruction jobs, or other jobs where the scope of work addresses other hazards in the clear zone. The Studies and Plans Squad should identify any existing hazardous mailboxes at the time of the scoping field check. After the field check, the squad shall send certified letters to the postal patrons using the hazardous mailboxes. A sample form letter is included for general use and is preferred in lieu of the sample letter shown in Chapter 58-5. Copies of the letters with the return receipts shall be included in the project reports as documentation of this effort. We will not initiate any direct meetings with the mailbox patrons. If any of them request to meet with us, we will of course do so to explain our safety concerns.

(Date)

#### PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Route:

Marked Route:

Section:

County:

Contract Number:

Location:

Dear Postal Patron:

It is the intent of the Illinois Department of Transportation to make improvements to this route in the near future. A part of these improvements includes protecting motorists from roadside hazards. A recent survey of mailbox supports within this project indicates that some may be potential hazards to the traveling public, and should be changed to meet certain safety requirements. The following paragraphs, referencing nationally recognized guidelines for highway design, note that mailboxes and their supports are important elements of roadside safety.

The *Roadside Design Guide*, published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), states that, "Limited accident data have shown that mailbox supports can contribute to the severity of an accident." Further, the AASHTO publication, *A Guide for Erecting Mailboxes on Highways*, contains information on mailbox supports and their location on the roadside. Briefly, the following guidelines should be used for mailbox supports:

- Mailbox supports which should be considered are nominal 4 inch by 4 inch or 4 inch diameter wood posts, or a metal post with a strength no greater than a 2 inch diameter standard strength steel pipe, embedded no more than 2 feet into the ground.
- Mailbox-to-support attachments should ideally prevent mailboxes from separating from their supports under vehicle impacts.
- Multiple mailbox installations should meet the same criteria as single mailbox installations. Multiple support installations should have their supports separated a minimum distance equal to three-fourths of their heights above ground. This will reduce interaction between adjacent mailboxes and supports.

Postal Patron  
Page Two  
(Date)

Because your mailbox and support are private property, we do not intend to remove or change it to a safer type. However, in the interest of public safety, and to help you avoid any potential liability if a vehicle strikes your mailbox, we recommend that it be changed to a safer type if it does not meet the above guidelines.

If you have any questions about the installation of a safe mailbox support, please call (collect if you wish) the number listed below. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

D. Clark  
District Engineer

For more information, please call:

\_\_\_\_\_ At \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Telephone

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