



Hillsdale County Road Commission

1919 HUDSON ROAD (M-99)

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Hillsdale County encourages residents to shake their mailboxes this month

Hillsdale County Road Commission asks their residents to prepare for winter by shaking their mailbox yet this month.

A mailbox is the only object allowed by law that homeowners can place in the road right-of-way. The location and construction of mailboxes must conform to the rules and regulations of the United States Postal Service and nationwide standards established by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

The road right-of-way is typically 66 feet wide or 33 feet from the centerline of the road. The right-of-way is maintained by the road commission and is used for residential and public utility purposes.

Over the years, a mailbox post can rot or become wobbly. By grabbing and shaking it, a resident can know if it's secure. Snow coming off a plow going 35 miles per hour has surprising force and digging a mailbox out and reinstalling it in frozen ground is no picnic.

Our number-one job is to maintain a safe and efficient road and right-of-way system. Responsibility for ensuring a mailbox is strong, goes to the resident.

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Hillsdale County Road Commission have policies in place regarding replacement of mailboxes that have obviously been hit by a snowplow. However, road agencies are not responsible for mailbox damage caused by standard snow removal operations. The road commission does have some important advice for residents.

Residents should prepare mailboxes for winter by tightening screws and ensuring the post and box are secure enough to endure large amounts of snow that is thrown. If the mailbox moves when shaken, the box may need to be repaired or replaced before winter.

We will be out in coming weeks preparing for winter maintenance operations. Each fall we find mailboxes that pose a serious roadside hazard to motorists and a liability risk for homeowners. Damage to posts and receptacles can often be prevented by proper routine maintenance.

If you have questions on what is permitted, please contact our office at (517) 437-4458.