

**Upper Saucon Township – Mailbox Replacement Policy**  
**Policy No. 2024-01**  
**Last Revised: 2/26/2024**  
**Approved by Board of Supervisors: February 26, 2024**

**Policy:**

The following shall constitute a policy for the handling of claims by Township Residents for damages to mailboxes caused by direct strikes from Township vehicles during the actual performance of snow plowing operations.

**Definitions:**

**Township** - Upper Saucon Township.

**Department** - The Township Roads and Properties Department.

**USPS** – United States Postal Service.

**Resident(s)** – The owner(s) or occupant(s) of real property located in the Township.

**Mailbox(es)** – A standard mailbox including the box and ground support (typically a pole or other attachment or anchor to the ground).

**Ornamental Mailbox** – A mailbox which is anything other than a standard mailbox and ground support, with no enhancements, and which meets no more than the minimum requirements of the USPS and is commercially available at stores or on-line.

**Direct Strike** – An occurrence in which a Township vehicle comes into direct contact with a mailbox in the course of plowing operations thereby causing damage to the mailbox.

**Purpose:**

The Department often works under difficult weather conditions, including the plowing of snow, and takes care to avoid damage to Residents’ mailboxes located in the public road rights-of-way. Experience shows that mailboxes are rarely, but sometimes, hit by plows. In addition, damage can be caused by the force of the snow hitting the mailbox during plowing operations. Unfortunately, while a Resident may not have a choice to locate a mailbox outside the road right-of-way due to USPS requirements, the Resident can take steps to minimize exposure to loss and damage. Accordingly, the purpose of this policy is to address mailbox damage resulting from Department snow plowing operations and claims for reimbursement by Residents.

**Scope:**

This policy applies to residential mailboxes damaged by the Department due to snow removal activities in the public rights-of-way.

**Policy:**

1. A Resident has an obligation to inspect and evaluate the condition of his or her mailbox and its support structure prior to the onset of winter weather as the mailbox and/or the support post may require maintenance or replacement. A Resident should ensure that the mailbox is firmly attached to the post and that the post will withstand the weight of snow thrown by the plow. A Resident has an obligation to consult with the USPS to ensure that the mailbox complies with all USPS guidelines. A copy of these guidelines is attached hereto, made a part hereof as **Exhibit A**.
2. Mailboxes may be damaged during Department plowing operations by a direct strike from a Township vehicle or by the force of snow thrown by the plow.
3. The Township will not repair, replace, or reimburse a Resident for damage to a mailbox caused by the force of snow thrown during plowing operations.
4. The Township will replace and/or repair a mailbox damaged as a result of a direct strike by a Township vehicle.
5. The Township will not replace or repair ornamental mailboxes or mailboxes not installed in accordance with USPS guidelines, and it will not repair lawn or other areas outside the road right-of-way.
6. The Department will investigate all claims of a direct strike to a mailbox to determine if a direct strike occurred.
7. After investigation, the Township will notify the Resident of the Township's findings.
8. If a Resident believes that a direct strike has occurred, the following process shall apply:
  - a. The Resident shall notify the Township within 48 hours of mailbox damage by phone (610-282-1171 ext. 1256) or email (email@uppersaucon.org).
  - b. A Township representative will determine if the damage to the mailbox was caused by a direct strike. The Township representative will also ensure that the mailbox was installed an appropriate distance from the roadway and in accordance with USPS standards. This will be determined by a site visit. The site visit will occur as soon as practical. The damaged mailbox must be left in plain sight for inspection.
  - c. If it is determined that mailbox damage has occurred from a direct strike, the Resident may choose one of the following options:
    - i. The Township will repair or replace the mailbox with a standard stock metal or wood post and black metal or plastic mailbox of the Township's choosing, up to a maximum total cost of \$75.00. This replacement will occur as time and conditions allow; or
    - ii. The Township will reimburse to the Resident the replacement cost (or repair cost) of the damaged mailbox up to a maximum amount of \$75.00. The Resident shall supply all documents supporting the amount of the claim, including receipts, bills, and proof of payment. Reimbursement will be processed by the Finance Department in a timely manner. The Township may, at its discretion, verify the replacement of the mailbox.

9. The Township assumes no responsibility for damage to a mailbox caused by PennDOT, private contractors, private vehicles, or any unknown source.
10. The Township is not admitting to any liability for damages sustained to a Resident's mailbox during snow plow operations because of the review or payment of a claim.
11. This policy shall take effect on February 27, 2024, at 12:01 a.m. and shall remain in effect until rescinded or amended by the Township Board of Supervisors.