

Mail Call

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Who doesn't love to get mail? Checking the mail is essentially a daily version of Christmas morning. Rather than looking for gifts beneath the tree, you simply pop open the mailbox door and peak inside.

It is exciting because you never know what will be waiting under the tree or in the mailbox. Will you find a fabulous gift like a new bicycle or perhaps a check from the Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes? However, most often all you get is new socks or junk mail.

Just like there are "rules" where Santa puts the gifts (under the tree or in the stocking hung by care over the fireplace), there are rules about mailbox installation and the kind of mailbox and posts that you are permitted.

To learn the specific rules governing mailboxes and posts check out the Stearns County Highway Policies and Guidelines webpage or Minnesota Administrative Rules Chapter 8818 (Mailbox installation and support standards).

In brief, your mailbox should be the proper height, not encroach into the road, and should have a breakaway post that swings out of the way in the event it is struck. In addition, you are not permitted to put a newspaper delivery box or other structure beneath the mailbox because the wing of the snowplow could hit it.

The reason these rules are necessary is safety. If a mailbox extends into the roadway, a passing motorist or snowplow could hit it. And imagine the damage that a mailbox post made of steel or concrete could cause.

During the recent road inspection, the Avon Township Supervisors observed a few egregious violations of the mailbox rules. Letters were sent to these residents requesting their cooperation in making necessary changes.

If everyone follows the simple rules, then mail call will be a safe and pleasant experience for everyone, every day of the year.