



For Immediate Release

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SHAKE YOUR MAILBOX DAY ON OCTOBER 15, 2011



The Macomb County Department of Roads would like to remind residents of **Shake Your Mailbox Day**, coming up on Saturday, October 15, 2011. We encourage everyone to take a moment to give your mailbox an aggressive shaking and a thorough inspection. During the winter months, damage to mailboxes is most often caused by snow pushing up against weakened posts or hardware. If you can shake your mailbox, it probably needs some maintenance. Take the time now to make any needed repairs so that your mailbox will be strong enough to survive the winter.

Each year, 70 to 100 people are killed in accidents involving rural mailboxes. Many others are permanently injured because mailboxes and their supports penetrate the windshield. Roadside mailboxes are in the road right of way and are allowed by road agencies as a convenience to residents. The Macomb County Department of Roads encourages residents to follow standard US Postal Service guidelines when it comes to mailbox installations. These guidelines are available from the US Postal Service or the Macomb County Department of Roads website at www.macombcountymi.gov/roads on the Publications page. Residents should be sure their mailbox falls within these guidelines. Concrete, brick and other cosmetic or enforcement materials can present a serious roadside hazard to motorists and a liability risk for homeowners.

"In most mailbox damage cases, our snow plow doesn't actually hit the mailbox," noted Bob Hoepfner, Director of Roads. "The force of snow thrown from the roadway is enough to knock down a loose mailbox. Damage to these posts and receptacles is not covered by the Department of Roads and can be prevented with some routine maintenance."

Although the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Macomb County Department of Roads have policies in place regarding replacement of mailboxes that have clearly been hit by a snowplow, these road agencies have never assumed responsibility for mailbox damage caused by routine snow removal operations.

"Taking a little time to tighten mailbox screws and secure posts now can prevent serious headaches later," Hoepfner said. "If the mailbox moves when shaken, the mailbox and/or post may not withstand our snow removal operations and should be repaired or replaced prior to the onset of winter."

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