

MAIL THEFT FAQs

Mail thieves continue to find success with stealing identities, money, packages and more. They often target full or unlocked mailboxes, but owners of locking mailboxes report an increase in thefts after finding their boxes pried open as well.

What can we do to protect our mail?

- Pick up your mail every day close to delivery time.
- Minimize what's delivered to your home.
 - Many companies including banks and health care groups will send statements and invoices electronically, if requested.
 - Cut down on junk mail by using <https://www.catalogchoice.org/> or note "return to sender" and "remove from mailing list" on pieces you wish to eliminate.
- Enroll in "Informed Delivery", a free service of the US Postal Service (USPS) that sends an email daily with scans of items scheduled for that day's delivery.
<https://informeddelivery.usps.com/box/pages/intro/start.action>
- Switch to a PO Box or have important / sensitive mail delivered to you at work.
- Upgrade to a locking or stronger locking mailbox.
- If your locking mailbox is tampered with, repair or replace the broken parts quickly.

Mailboxes and their installation are the responsibility of the property owner.

- To repair a broken lock on a locking mailbox, consider contacting a lock smith.
- To replace or upgrade to a locking mailbox similar to those in use throughout the Village, contact Security Safe and Lock on Main Street in Bellevue at: <https://www.security-safe.com/mailboxes>
- To upgrade to a stronger locking mailbox, make sure the new box will fit into the same space as your current box. There are many companies and products out there; the Town uses a Fort Knox mailbox. They offer many sizes in a variety of price ranges:
<https://www.fortknoxmailbox.com/>.
- Mailboxes are priced individually. If you are interested in coordinating a group discount with others on your mailstand, use your WABA Green Book to contact the property owners who share the mailstand, i.e., the structure that houses the mailboxes.

Mailstands and their maintenance are the responsibility of those who use it.

- If your mailstand needs repair, replacement, or adjustments to fit larger mailboxes, use the WABA Green Book to contact the property owners on your mailstand and work out a plan for the needed work. Mailbox stands should have a similar aesthetic to the existing structure.
- For a new type of mailbox like a cluster box purchased as one unit, contact the Bellevue Postmaster for additional guidance, because there may be other factors to consider, e.g., the order of the addresses within the cluster.
- If the replacement mailstand will impact nearby tree roots, please contact the Town for help in determining if the installation requires the involvement of the Town Arborist and/or the Town Engineer.

If you are a victim of mail theft:

- Report the incident to the King County Sheriff at <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/sheriff/on-line-reporting/on-line-reporting.aspx>.
- Report the theft to the United States Postal Inspection Service; they are responsible for investigating all mail theft. <https://www.uspis.gov/report/>.
- File a complaint with the FTC: <https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/#crnt&panel1-1> or <https://www.identitytheft.gov/>.
- Notify your bank and other lenders or institutions as needed.
- Consider requesting a credit freeze through the three credit bureaus: <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0497-credit-freeze-fags>.
- Secure/upgrade your mailbox.

If you are the victim of identity theft:

- Report the theft to the King County Sheriff at <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/sheriff/on-line-reporting/on-line-reporting/identity-theft-reporting.aspx>.
- Arrange immediately for a 90-day fraud alert through the three credit bureaus: Experian, Equifax and TransUnion.
- File a complaint with the FTC: <https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/#crnt&panel1-1> or <https://www.identitytheft.gov/>.
- Notify your bank and other lenders or institutions as needed.