

USPS Issues Mailbox Plea as Snow Hits

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As the winter weather hits large parts of the United States, the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) has issued a public plea to residents in snow-and-ice-affected areas, asking them to keep access to mailboxes clear of snow and ice.

What To Know

The USPS is appealing to communities in upstate New York, Indiana, Minnesota, and Massachusetts, and other areas, to keep paths, walkways, porches, sidewalks and mailboxes clear of snow and ice, as winter storms continue to create hazardous, wintry conditions across the country, potentially disrupting local postal services.

The agency has outlined a series of best practices and reminders for homeowners and businesses to clear snow from curbside mailboxes, keep walkways free of ice, and maintain safe access to steps and handrails.

The USPS said, in a statement to New York residents, that, under unsafe conditions, mail delivery may be suspended to addresses that are not safely accessible: "Keeping a clear path to and around mailboxes will help mail carriers continue consistent delivery as well as keep them safe from potential slipping and/or injuries."

The USPS is asking residents in areas affected by wintry conditions to:

- Clear snow from curbside mailboxes to allow mail vehicles to approach, deliver, and depart without having to perform unsafe maneuvers.

- Ensure walkways, porches, steps, and driveways are free of snow and have enough grip or traction to stop mail carriers from slipping, tripping, or falling.
- Keep steps, handrails, and overhangs in good repair and free of ice to reduce the risk of slipping or being hit with falling debris.

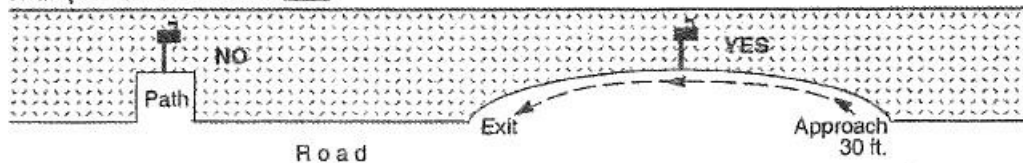
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Approaches to Curbside Mailboxes

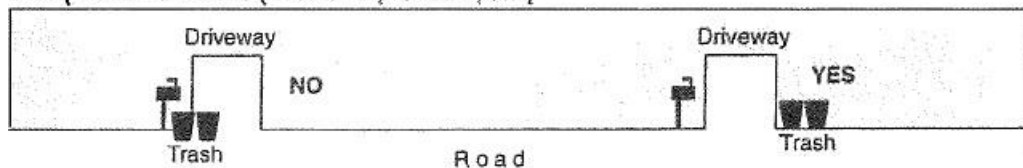
Dear Customer,

The Postal Service depends on you to meet postal requirements regarding delivery and collection of mail to curbside boxes. *Please keep the full approach and exits to your mailbox clear, as illustrated in the examples below.* Removing trash cans, snow, vehicles, and any other objects from the area allows the carrier to deliver your mail safely and efficiently without exiting the vehicle. Your cooperation in this matter is sincerely appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact us. Thank you. Your Postmaster

Example: Snow Removal



Example: Obstructions (trash cans, vehicles, etc.)



Notice 38, April 2000

What People Are Saying

In its New York advisory, the USPS stated: “Any amount of snow can cause a dangerous situation for mail carriers and others.”

Indiana’s regional USPS statement said: “Postal employees make every reasonable effort to deliver mail in many difficult weather conditions. With your help, we can keep our letter carriers, your neighbors, and your property safe.”

In Massachusetts, USPS officials said: “If mailboxes are blocked off and conditions are difficult, letter carriers must always consider safety

and accessibility first. Letter carriers are instructed to not deliver to mailboxes and locations which are too hazardous or unsafe to access.”

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Minnesota’s USPS office said: “Residents who receive delivery to roadside mailboxes also must keep the approach to, and exit from, the mailbox clear of snow or any other obstacles, like trash cans and other vehicles. The carrier needs to get in, and then out, without leaving the vehicle or backing up.”

What Happens Next

The USPS will continue to communicate with the public, providing timely reminders to help maintain the safe delivery of mail throughout the winter months, especially in regions impacted by severe storms or icy conditions.