

Shake YOUR Mailbox DAY



The Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC) regrets any damage to mailboxes and/or supports that occur as a result of road maintenance activities. KCRC will not assume responsibility for mailbox damage that may be caused by snow/ice that is being plowed from the roadway. An owner must clearly demonstrate the damage was caused by direct contact by road commission equipment to receive consideration of a claim settlement.

Statewide the County Road Association of Michigan and the United States Postal Service partnered in the first **"Shake Your Mailbox Day" Saturday, October 23rd, 2010.**

Mailbox owners are encouraged to regularly inspect and perform routine maintenance on their mailbox. Mailboxes should withstand wet heavy snow and slush coming off from the snow plow. Visit our website for a brochure on Mailboxes and Supports guidelines and policy.

www.kalamazooountyroads.com

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Managing Director's Message

As we wrap up our 2010 construction season, I continue to be proud to be in public service at KCRC. Where else does the public have the ability to see and tangibly evaluate our efforts every day?

Our efforts must be focused on continuous improvement for every part of our operations including construction, engineering, materials, equipment and staff.

Efforts in continuous improvement begin with our staffing team. In September we began a management leadership development program to invest in our management staff and develop those leadership skills necessary to serve the public efficiently today and in the future. Our staff must embrace these leadership skills to effectively and efficiently maintain our operations in a climate without new revenue, increasing costs and an increasing level of expectations.


As a 2010 graduate of Leadership Kalamazoo – "Engage Today, Improve Tomorrow" and through our current management leadership development program, it continuously reinforces how leadership is vital in public service.

What are KCRC's efforts in continuous improvement and leadership in public service?

- Collaboration
- Equipment investments
- Technology enhancements
- Asset management data collection
- Communication efforts
- Fiscal responsibility
- Staff evaluation and training
- Road improvements and priorities
- Operational reviews
- Service response

These efforts are on-going and continuously developed to meet the needs of our changing world. Our work is never complete and we will continue to be focused on continuous improvement, leadership and public service in 2011. Thank you for allowing us to serve you!

Sincerely,



Joanna I. Johnson
Managing Director

"The manager accepts the status quo; the leader challenges it." - Warren Bennis

"The price of greatness is responsibility". - Winston Churchill

What is Shake Your Mailbox Day?

- Governor Granholm has proclaimed October 23, 2010 as the 2nd Annual Shake Your Mailbox Day in Michigan;
- Shake Your Mailbox Day is a joint effort on the part of your county road agency and the United States Postal Service (U.S.P.S.)
- The day is designated to get the public involved in proactive mailbox maintenance;
- Record snow falls in recent winters have led to an increase in the number of mailboxes damaged by heavy snow thrown from passing plows. Many of the mailboxes damaged by winter snow removal have become loose or in need of repair after years of use. Damage to these posts and receptacles could have been prevented by proper routine maintenance;
- Road agencies recognize damage to mail receptacles is an inconvenience to residents and are seeking to minimize the impact by encouraging preventative maintenance;
- These preventable damages cause negative public relations for road agencies often accused of hitting the mailboxes with the snow plow;
- Although the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and many local road agencies have policies for addressing mailboxes clearly damaged during winter maintenance operations, these policies vary by jurisdiction. One thing, however is consistent, road agencies have never assumed responsibility for mailbox damage caused by flying snow that is being plowed from the roadway; and
- Local community organizations are encouraged to become involved in helping those in the community who may be unable to check for mailbox damage and make the needed repairs.

What Should Residents Do?

- Residents should prepare mailboxes for winter by tightening screws and ensuring the post and receptacle are secure enough to endure large amounts of thrown snow. If the mailbox moves when shaken, this is likely an indication the mailbox and/or post may not withstand standard snow removal operations and should be repaired or replaced prior to the onset of winter.

Other typical mailbox improvement activities (preventive maintenance) include:

- Replace loose hinges on a mailbox door;
- Repaint or replace a mailbox that may have rusted, exposing dangerous, sharp edges; and
- Replace or add reflective house numbers to allow emergency responders to more easily find your home.

What you need to know about mailboxes?

- Mailboxes are one of the only objects allowed by law to be placed in the road right-of-way;
- The location and construction of mailboxes must conform to specific rules and regulations;
- Each year, 70 to 100 people are killed in accidents involving rural mailboxes. Many others are permanently injured when mailboxes and their supports penetrate a vehicles windshield;
- Although steel tractor wheels, milk cans filled with concrete, bricks and other items are artistic, they present a serious roadside hazard to motorists; and
- They also present a liability risk for homeowners. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) warns "private individuals and corporation, as well as governmental entities, may be liable for their roles in creating or maintaining highway hazards."

Michigan's state and local road agencies follow the standards published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) in "*A Guide for Erecting Mailboxes on Highways.*"

- Only one support should be used per box or group of boxes;
- Wood posts should be no more than 4 ½ inches diameter if round, 4x4 inches if rectangular;
- Metal pipes should be standard steel or aluminum with no more than a 2 inch inside diameter;
- Supports should yield or collapse if struck. They should bend or fall away from a vehicle and not create a severe deceleration;
- Supports cannot be fitted with an anchor plate (metal post), embedded over 24 inches into the ground, or set in concrete;
- The mailbox must be constructed of sheet metal, plastic or similar weight materials, with weight not to exceed 11 pounds;
- The United States Postal Service asks that roadside mailboxes be 36 to 42 inches off of the ground, and 8 to 12 inches behind the shoulder or the curb;
- A mailbox and its support will be considered hazardous to motorists when the support exceeds the described structural limitations; and
- Any mailbox and its support considered to be a hazard should be removed from the road right-of-way and replaced.

We encourage you to *Shake Your Mailbox*
October 23rd, 2010



Winter Maintenance Program

As the Michigan winter season is around the corner - our dedicated employees are available throughout winter and expected to report when their services are needed. With increased costs of fuel and materials, and decreasing revenues, we are vigilant not to waste our resources. We will continue to work hard to provide motorists with safe and efficient roadways.

In an effort to provide the most efficient and effective snow removal on our County roads. Our goal is to provide the Maximum level of service to the greatest number of people as quickly as possible.

Our snow removal priorities:

1. Snow route roads
2. Balance of primary roads
3. Through local roads
4. Subdivision or plat streets
5. Dead-end and cul-de-sac roads

Every-day service is provided to priorities 1, 2 & 3 during snow events. Every other day service is our goal for plat streets, dead-end and cul-de-sac roads. If a storm is long lasting or a second storm starts before clean up on priorities 4 & 5 have been completed, crews will return to priorities 1, 2 & 3.

Help us educate the children of our county on the risks presented by snowplows and the dangers of playing on the high piles of snow and ice that are near the roadway during snow removal –

- Please KEEP THE CHILDREN AWAY from roadside piles of snow
- Don't build snow forts, make tunnels, or play in or on snow banks next to roads
- Keep away from the edge of the roadway as you wait for the school bus, get the mail, or watch the plow trucks
- Stay away from the end of a driveway when a snow plow is approaching
- Hidden objects under the snow, when thrown by the plow truck could cause serious injury
- Keep sleds and toys away from the roadways at all times

Reminders for motorists:

- Do not park or abandon a vehicle or other object in the right-of-way
- Don't attempt to pass a snow plow vehicle while they're plowing
- Never pass a plow on the right as wing plows are often hidden by the snow cloud being kicked up by the plow
- Plow drivers have limited visibility and they cannot see directly behind their trucks
- Motorists are advised not to travel next to a plow
- Plows can suddenly move sideways from hitting drifts or by cutting through packed snow
- Don't crowd the plow!
- Wear your seatbelt and always allow extra time to reach your destination

Please be advised that it is a violation of the Michigan Vehicle Code, as well as a safety hazard, for contractors, excavators, and homeowners to push snow onto or across a roadway or the shoulder of a roadway.

Any violation of the Michigan Vehicle Code, Act 300 of 1949, 257.677a "obstruction of safety vision by removal or deposit of snow, ice, or slush prohibited."



KCRC in our efforts of continuous improvement, have added 4 additional trucks to our fleet for 2010. These trucks have been equipped with a side mount “wing plow” to provide greater efficiency in our winter maintenance program. The use of wing plows for winter operations in Michigan has increased over the past few years. Using wing plows can make winter operations more effective and efficient. This equipment has allowed us to evaluate our current system of snow routes for the 2010 – 2011 winter seasons. These will primarily be used on our “Snow Route” network of roads.

PLEASE REMEMBER – DON'T CROWD THE PLOW!

KCRC will continue to use a winter maintenance blend of sand/salt/liquid deicer mix on our roadways again this winter season. The continued cost of our primary material – SALT – has made it a necessity to have a mix that will assist to offset this material cost. Along with proper application techniques, we hope to offset the use of salt and continue to provide an efficient winter maintenance program.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>COST OF SALT</u>
2004	\$28.05
2005	\$28.75
2006	\$29.73
2007	\$41.25
2008	\$40.50
2009	\$47.77
2010	\$61.28

Staff Highlights

Travis Bartholomew, General Superintendent, together with our Area Superintendent Management team is dedicated to provide the best in public service. Your primary and first contact for your road related service requests are as follows;

*Jeff Daughtry – Brady, Climax, Pavilion, Wakeshma Townships
jdaughtry@kcrc-roads.com/381-3170 Extension 247*

*Jim Beaudoin – Prairie Ronde, Oshtemo, Schoolcraft, Texas Townships
jbeaudoin@kcrc-roads.com/381-3170 Extension 246*

*Bill DeYoung – Ross, Richland, Charleston, Comstock Townships
bdeyoung@kcrc-roads.com/381-3170 Extension 245*

*Terry Tilley – Kalamazoo, Cooper, Alamo Townships
ttilley@kcrc-roads.com/381-3170 Extension 244*

As your local road professionals, we look forward to serving you. Service requests can also be emailed via our website at www.kalamazooountyroads.com or by calling 269-381-3170.



2010 Board of County Road Commissioners of Kalamazoo County

To better serve our County and local officials, each Road Commissioner has also been assigned as a liaison to various townships we serve as follows:

Kent L. McCauley – Chairman; Brady, Climax, Pavilion
Kenneth R. Oscarson - Vice Chairman; Kalamazoo, Prairie Ronde, Wakeshma
Jeffrie M. Maddox –Comstock, Cooper, Ross
Dennis J. Berkebile – Charleston, Schoolcraft, Texas
Daniel J. Moyle – Alamo, Oshtemo, Richland

We are committed to providing a safe and convenient road system for our county motorists. As our customers and as residents of Kalamazoo County you are also entitled to excellent service from us at all times.

We aim to provide answers to your service requests. We encourage our residents and the motoring public to report road conditions that need attention. To make sure our service to you is prompt and courteous we strive to continually improve our methods of contact.

Office hours are 7:30am – 4pm, Monday through Friday, 269-381-3171 or *call 911 for emergencies.*

Our services on the web can be found at www.kalamazooountyroads.com and are designed to keep you updated on the news and information from our agency. You can contact us via email at info@kcrc-roads.com.

The goal of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Kalamazoo County is using our expertise, energy and funds to provide the safest and most convenient road system possible, and to contribute to economic development and high quality of life throughout the county.