

Theft from Apartment Mailboxes Spikes

Over the last month, there has been a spike in theft from apartment mailboxes on the west side of Richfield. Thieves are targeting complexes without video surveillance. According to NBC News, mail theft has skyrocketed by more than 600% over the last few years. Unfortunately, apartment mailboxes are not immune to the problem. Though we certainly hope your mail doesn't fall prey to these unfortunate stats, it's best if you're always prepared.

Report (the Crime)

Call 911 to report the theft and immediately notify the building management company so that they can alert residents and get to work on replacing the mailbox, if necessary. Also, report the mail theft to the [United States Postal Inspection Service](#) (USPIS). If you expected to receive a particular piece of mail — a check, for example, or a package — try to get in touch with the sender right away to alert them of the situation. Additionally, follow the [USPIS's](#) recommendations on how to protect yourself from mail-related crimes such as fraud and identity theft.

Prepare (for Potential Problems)

Mail theft may be a precursor to identity theft since mail can contain so much personal information. Look into an identity theft protection service to be on the safe side. It may feel like a significant expense, but protecting your identity is a worthy investment. If you wish to avoid any expenses, consider following the [Federal Trade Commission's instructions](#) for placing a fraud alert with one of the three major credit bureaus — it's free! Additionally, check out your credit card benefits. Many banks and credit card companies now provide identity monitoring services to their cardholders for a marginal fee.

Modify (Your Mail Protocols)

Learn what time of day your mail usually arrives, and try your best to pick it up promptly, particularly if you're expecting a tax refund, W-2, or check. Don't let it pile up!

Speak with other tenants about the issue. Share an increased alertness about apartment mailbox security. Lastly, get to know your postal carrier, who can give you more info on their schedule so that you can time your mail pick-up and drop-offs accordingly.

Take (Additional Steps)

Theft of any sort is aggravating and annoying. Here are a few other steps you can take:

- Go green by requesting emailed bills, invoices, and paychecks.
- Sign up for [Informed Delivery by USPS](#) so you can digitally preview your mail and manage packages.
- Look into a PO Box if you're especially concerned about theft.
- Make sure you formally change your address after every move, so your future mail follows you to your new home.