

Community mailboxes will hurt residential property values

Postal service cuts are coming to people's homes, and they may be wondering what the impact will be.

Canada Post intends to install and use Community Mailboxes (CMBs) where homes currently have door-to-door delivery. The plan will affect both postal workers and users, so the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) wanted to find out how much the CMB plan could cost homeowners. Earlier this year, CUPW investigated how CMBs might affect residential property values.

We learned there is more than one way to find whether something would influence a home's market value. One method is called the direct comparison approach. This approach suggests that yes, a CMB installation would probably reduce a home's value: if you had a choice between two homes, one with and one without a CMB there, other factors being equal, it's reasonable to think you would prefer the one without. So you would likely pay more for that one.

But this direct comparison approach doesn't put a dollar figure on the impact.

Another method, a "before and after" method of appraisal would help determine the amount of the devaluation, but this kind of data isn't available yet, because there aren't yet any residential properties in Canada that have had CMBs added to their property. In other words, Canada Post is in unknown territory, and no-one can accurately predict the cost.

Factors

Why would someone rather buy a house without a CMB – or one without a CMB right next door?

Because of:

- the associated increase in traffic and noise;
- the nuisance of vehicles stopped and idling there;
- debris and litter;
- loss of privacy;
- decreased curb appeal;
- and vandalism concerns, among other possible reasons

CUPW has questions

Canada Post Corporation (CPC) maintains it has the right to impose its new mailboxes on people and doesn't have to give them any choice in the matter. Representatives of CPC have met with affected residents to tell them this is how things will be.

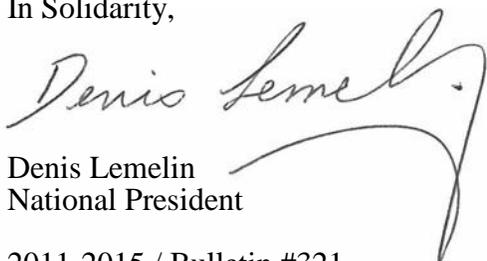
But they're leaving some important questions unanswered.

Should a residential property owner seek compensation? Are they being misled to believe they have no choice? What will they do about the costs of cleaning and maintaining the property if/when Canada Post fails to adequately maintain the CMB area? What if someone should be injured or cause other liability on a homeowner's property?

Canada Post's plan makes homeowners and the public pay for the costs, while cutting services. Offering less for more isn't a good plan.

If you, your friends and family, or the public have questions about this issue, please ask them to go to savecanadapost.ca or call toll free 855-878-7111 to get more information and join the campaign to Save Canada Post.

In Solidarity,



Denis Lemelin
National President

2011-2015 / Bulletin #321

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