

Mr. Max Jannish
United States Post Office
Via FAX: 408-437-6638

December 3, 2007

Dear Mr. Jannish,

I'm writing to ask that you investigate a recent issue that that occurred with the Los Gatos Post Office. In August of this year, my husband and I moved from our home on [REDACTED] O [REDACTED] (Rural Route 4 in the [REDACTED] zip code) to our new home at [REDACTED] S [REDACTED] Road (Rural Route 1 in the [REDACTED] zip code). Our new home on [REDACTED] Road is a new construction and when we asked our general contractor the procedure for receiving mail, he informed us that there were many serviced mailboxes on our road and that we should post a USPS certified lockable mailbox at the top of our driveway with sufficient clearance for the mail truck to pull off the road and at an appropriate height for the mail truck. So we did this and forwarded our mail from the O [REDACTED] address to the S [REDACTED] Address. And for two weeks we received mail. (See Enclosure A.)

At approximately two weeks into receiving mail at this address, we received a note to call Jill at the Los Gatos post office. When I called her, she informed me that the substitute mail carrier complained that our mail box was in an unsafe area and that he wanted our mailbox moved to [REDACTED] Hollow Road or S [REDACTED] Road. This surprised me because we carefully placed our mailbox far enough off of the road so the mail carrier could safely pull off without worry of passing traffic. You will see in my photos (Enclosures C) that there is ample room for a mail truck to pull off the road. Jill also informed me that she had driven by our mailbox and believed it was indeed safe and it shouldn't be a problem, however, she had to raise the issue with the post master, Kathy Faupel, and she would call me back to let me know the resolution.

Two days later, I called them back to check on the status. Unfortunately, I found out that they decided to stop delivering mail and deemed my mailbox unsafe. Ms. Faupel claimed that it is unsafe to turn left at my mailbox (because that is the direction of their route). I informed her that my driveway met rigorous demands of both the Santa Cruz county and the Fire Marshall with a 250-foot line of sight vision in either direction for traffic safety codes and for a non-blind driveway. She subjectively responded, "It's not safe for us." Ms. Faupel added that I needed to move my mailbox to [REDACTED] Hollow Road (about 1/6 of a mile from my driveway). [REDACTED] Hollow is a very rural road that intersects with S [REDACTED] Road. The residents have a charming Alpine grouped mailbox design to reflect their unique road. There is no room or welcome for our unattractive mailbox in their mailbox area.

When I inquired if the mail carrier could travel an extra 100 yards up the road to turn left in a turn out area where an 18-wheeler can make a U-turn, and then come back down, Ms. Faupel immediately resisted that suggestion claiming it would cost the USPS an extra \$100 per year in gas to do this. The comment seemed like a poor business decision in light of the potential lost revenue from servicing one more residence, but and extremely poor business decision in light of the fact that I am a home-based business owner, spending \$2500-\$3000 annually in shipping costs. Most of that was shipping vended to the USPS. Since this issue has arisen, I've moved all my shipping over to United Parcel Service and Federal Express who happily deliver to my home. I'm astonished that Ms. Faupel could be so shortsighted in her customer service philosophy to cost the USPS significant lost revenue to save \$100 in annual fuel fees.

Further Ms. Faupel seemed to blame my choice for living in a rural area and stated that the post office cannot guarantee delivery in a rural area. Yet in the next breath she claimed that our road has too much traffic for the carrier to safely turn left. The contradiction and evasiveness in these claims is obvious.

Later when I examined the difference between making a left turn at [REDACTED] Hollow (which the mail carrier does do on his route) and making the left hand turn at our mailbox, it appeared that the [REDACTED] Hollow left hand turn is much more dangerous than the left hand turn at our mailbox. (Enclosures C & D.) I'm at a loss to understand Ms. Faupel's reasoning of safety, and wondered if the actual issue is that my mailbox is a singular mailbox and [REDACTED] Hollow mailboxes are grouped, thereby making the carrier's job easier if he had one less stop.

As the wife of a former U.S. Navy Lt. Commander, and a Naval Academy graduate, who served his country for 13 years and completed 45 aviation combat missions in the Persian Gulf, I refuse to passively tolerate Ms. Faupel's decision. I can't imagine the USPS not being embarrassed for treating anyone, let alone a combat veteran, in this manner.

Since then, I decided not to move my mailbox and instead, I opened a mailbox at a Postal Mate. I did not forward mail from O [REDACTED] or S [REDACTED] Road to this address simply because I believed this matter would get resolved. I cannot tell you how disappointed I am that the Los Gatos post office is forcing me to drive a daily round trip of 25 miles, needlessly wasting fossil fuel and leaving an unnecessary carbon footprint in our environment so I can run my business, when a mail carrier drives by my posted mailbox six days per week.

The multiple addresses for our mail delivery caused by Ms. Faupel's decision has since resulted in an exposure to human error and subsequently mail fraud. Recently, I discovered one letter which was originally addressed to our O [REDACTED] address forwarded by the Los Gatos Post Office to an address on Highway 9, an address with which I have absolutely no affiliation. (Enclosure B.) Multiple addresses plus human error leaves us susceptible to mail fraud as it is evident that our mail gets forwarded by the Los Gatos Post Office to random locations. An additional concern is emergency service error, as we are frequently told by government offices, such as the DMV, that our address doesn't exist since the USPS does not recognize it.

At this time, I request that you investigate this situation and that you and Ms. Faupel revisit delivering mail to our address on S [REDACTED] Road in order to alleviate any exposure to mail fraud. I have been informed by many mail carriers and neighbors, that my mailbox is indeed located in a safe area. In addition, my mailbox is located on the side of the road that was the precedence for locating a mailbox. There are over a hundred mailboxes on S [REDACTED] road that receive mail. It's astounding that my mailbox is singled out in this manner.

If you have further question, please contact me at the address or phone number in this letter. I look forward to working with you and for a quick resolution of this issue.

Sincerely,

Julie Starling

Enclosures:

- A: Two letters verifying delivery to my mailbox on [REDACTED]
- B: A letter incorrectly forwarded to a random address that is not associated with me in any way
- C: Two Photos of our mailbox at [REDACTED] Road
- D: Two Photos of the mailbox area at [REDACTED] Hollow Road.

CC: Joe Pirzynski
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