



# A Homeowner's Guide to the *Value of a Boundary Survey*

Protecting Your Investment With the Services of a Licensed Land Surveyor

## Your Real Estate Investment

The most valuable asset for the average person or couple is their investment in a home and real estate. Whether you currently own a home or are planning to buy one, you want to ensure that it's a wise investment. Homeowners who know they will benefit from the services of an attorney, home inspector or real estate agent often don't know about the valuable service that a licensed land surveyor can provide.

## Why Get A Boundary Survey?

When purchasing real estate, you acquire certain rights to land described on your deed. Improvements you see on the ground such as fences, landscaping, buildings and trees may or may not all be in conformity with your deed. Under certain circumstances, the physical use of your property by neighbors can result in a claim of ownership. Your rights can be restricted by easements or other uses. The only person who can legally locate your boundaries, easements and other land rights is a licensed land surveyor.

## How Do I Contact A Land Surveyor?

Licensed land surveyors authorized to perform boundary surveys in the Minnesota are typically listed in tele-

phone book yellow pages under "Surveyors – Land." The Minnesota Society of Professional Surveyors also offers a free referral service. Just call 1-800-890-LAND or 651-203-7256.

## What Services Are Provided?

As with many types of professional services, a licensed land surveyor can provide several different services depending on your exact needs. An ordinary boundary survey will typically involve locating existing boundary markers or setting new markers, locating structures on the property and providing a drawing. A boundary and topographic survey will include the previously described services plus the location and mapping of landscaping, trees and other natural features. A licensed land surveyor can also assist you with land subdivisions and boundary adjustments. Make sure the



land surveyor understands exactly what you need, and how you will use the survey.

### How Much Will It Cost?

The cost for surveying a parcel of land is determined by several factors such as the complexity of the deed description, available boundary markers, terrain, and the services provided. A survey is a long-term investment. If improvements don't change and corner markers are preserved, your property might not need to be surveyed again for many years.

### How Do I Proceed?

If you are planning to purchase real estate, you can ask the seller to provide an up-to-date boundary survey and map to ensure there are no problems relating to the property boundaries. If the purchase is new construction you can ask the builder to provide a boundary survey and drawing of the completed project. If necessary, contact a licensed land surveyor or yourself to help protect your interests.

If you already own real estate and plan to make any

improvements such as building additions, landscaping, tree planting or removal, or fence construction, contact the proper local unit of government to determine what land surveying requirements apply. A licensed land surveyor can help you meet those requirements, and also help make sure the land you're building on is your own — not your neighbor's.

If you already own real estate and have any questions about your property boundaries, land description or easements, contact a licensed land surveyor.

### Don't Be Confused!

Don't rely on assurances about boundaries that are not provided by a licensed land surveyor. Maps depicting land boundaries that can be found and viewed on the Internet are typically very inaccurate. Maps that are prepared by a licensed land surveyor will include the surveyor's signature and license number, and will be based on actual measurements of your land.

Other general questions you may have can be answered by visiting [www.mnsurveyor.com](http://www.mnsurveyor.com) or calling 800-890-LAND or 651-203-7256.



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