

What is a Professional Land Surveyor?

Per Colorado Revised Statutes 12-25-202(7): "Professional Land Surveyor" means an individual who practices professional land surveying and who is currently registered with the board after demonstrating competency to practice, as defined by section 12-25-214. Registration is earned through years of education and experience and successful completion of a series of licensing examinations.

What is a Land Survey?

A land survey is performed for the purpose of locating, describing, monumenting and mapping the boundaries and corners of a parcel of land. It may also include mapping of the topography of the parcel, and the location of buildings or other improvements upon the parcel.

What is a boundary?

A boundary is any natural or artificial separation marking the border of two adjacent properties. A natural boundary is one existing in nature, such as a river; while an artificial boundary is one created by written conveyance such as the Public Land Survey System, Subdivisions or Deeds.

How are boundaries created?

Most boundaries are created by written documents (such as warranty or quit claim deeds) that contain specific descriptions. Property rights may also be established by unwritten means such as long time physical occupation of land. A Professional Land Surveyor will research these factors and how they affect the boundaries of your property.

When should I have my land surveyed?

You should have your land surveyed:

- Before you purchase it. This will disclose the relationship between the lines of possession and the deeded property lines.
- A lending institution may require either a Land Survey Plat or an Improvement Location Certificate of your property when you borrow money on it.
- Whenever you believe there may be a conflict of use on your property.
- Prior to dividing any parcel of land for sale.
- The county or city that your property is located in may require a Land Survey prior to the construction of any structure or improvement on the property.
- When you intend to sell any tract of land.
- When your lawyer, architect, real estate agent or municipal planning or engineering office advises or requires it.

How do I authorize a land survey?

Explain why you want the survey. The surveyor can then advise you as to what standards and type of survey is required. You should furnish the Professional Land Surveyor with a description of the property along with all other information or documents that you may have regarding the parcel. These would include abstracts of title, title reports, previous survey reports and maps, and the location of any corner monuments. The Professional Land Surveyor may request a retainer and written authorization to proceed prior to conducting the survey.

How much will a survey cost?

The Professional Land Surveyor's fees will be based on the anticipated difficulty and time required to complete the project. Routine survey projects may be estimated as to cost, but the client should be aware that in many situations, the Professional Land Surveyor cannot predict the amount of work that will be required to recover necessary monuments, restore lost or obliterated corners, research city and county records, collect field data, complete mathematical calculations, and prepare descriptions and maps of the property. All of this must be combined and analyzed to establish the location of property corners and create the final map.

One of the most uncertain and costly parts of the survey is the recovery of various types of monuments. It is important for land owners, contractors and the general public to be aware that the careless treatment and destruction of survey monuments adds time and cost to subsequent surveys.

Competitive bidding for the lowest price does not necessarily protect the interests of the client, the public or the Professional Land Surveyor. The competency, reputation, education and experience of several surveyors should be considered before one is selected to perform the survey.

Duties of the Professional Land Surveyor

A Professional Land Surveyor renders a highly technical service to the Client. As a licensed professional, the services provided by the surveyor must comply with several applicable laws, regulations, standards and codes which have been established by state, county, and local governments and professional societies. The Professional Land Surveyor must conform to these guidelines and will abide by these high standards of conduct and practice.

What can a Professional Land Surveyor do for me?

The Professional Land Surveyor can:

- Review your deed along with other evidence and render a professional opinion as to the locations and conflicts of the boundaries of your land.
- Set monuments at your property corners and mark them so they can be easily found and identified.
- Keep an accurate record of all services performed and measurements obtained.
- Identify and advise you of any apparent defect in your land description or evidence of conflict of ownership and/or use.
- Prepare a plat or map of your property indicating boundary measurements, the monuments found and placed, and the calculated area.
- Provide the client with copies of these maps bearing the Professional Land Surveyor's signature and seal. Copies of these maps will also be filed in the County Records where the land is located. This will ensure that the plat or map is available for public inspection.

In addition, a Professional Land Surveyor is qualified to:

- Create a property description for all new parcels or any existing parcels that may have a defect.
- Appear in court as an expert witness concerning real property ownership, location or use.
- Assist you in the planning and layout of the Lots, Blocks, streets, easements, etc. in a new subdivision.

Protect your investment

In order to protect your investment, it is best to retain a Professional Land Surveyor prior to the planning of your development and investment of funds. The Professional Land Surveyor can locate the boundaries of a property upon which improvements are planned and constructed, and can layout proposed improvements on your property. These professional services assure that your improvements are positioned correctly, possibly preventing costly complications.

Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado, Inc.

Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado, Inc., founded in 1966 and incorporated in 1981, is an organization dedicated to the improvement of the profession of Land Surveying and the education of the public about the profession. We are affiliated with the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping and the National Society of Professional Surveyors, and are a member of the Western Federation of Professional Surveyors. The PLSC takes an active role in shaping educational programs and legislation in Colorado, and our members subscribe to high standards of ethics, professional conduct, and protection of the public welfare.

A list of members of the Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado, Inc. practicing in your area can be obtained by contacting the PLSC office at (303) 424-8156.

When You Need A Land Survey



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