

Find A Lawyer**Select type of practice:**

Real Estate Law

Enter City or Zip:

95403

California

Find

[Browse Lawyers by State](#)[Browse by Type of Practice](#)[Submit Your Legal Issue](#)**Browse Real Estate Center**[Tenants' Rights](#)[Landlords](#)[Home Ownership](#)**Search****Enter Search Term:**

Public

Search

Message Boards**Select a Board:**

Popular Topics

Go

[FindLaw](#) > [Public](#) > [Real Estate Center](#) > [Articles](#)My current location: **95403 / Santa Rosa, CA** | [Change location](#)✉ [Email](#) 🖨 [Print](#) 📖 [Bookmark](#)

Top 10 Reasons to Have Your Property Surveyed

So, you think you know everything there is to know about the legal description of your property. If you had to, you could dig up that old plat and calculate precisely where your property begins and ends. And you know exactly who has a right to come onto your property and why.

If that's true, you're one step ahead of most property owners. Most people seek out the expertise of a professional surveyor to settle common property description issues before they become problems. And in addition to a professional survey, many people seek other specific certifications such as an environmental certification, a zoning opinion letter, or a flood plain classification from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Following are some common reasons property owners hire a surveyor.

1. **BOUNDARY LINES.** One of the most common reasons a landowner seeks the assistance of a surveyor, the location of boundary lines and other lines of occupancy or possession is a critical piece of information to have before you build a fence, add a sunroom or pave your driveway. All too often the survey shows that you and your neighbors were operating under the wrong assumption about the placement of the boundary line between your properties. Before you have that fence erected, you want to make sure it will be built on your property, not your neighbor's. The boundary line certification will also tell you whether the legal description of your property is accurate.
2. **GORES, OVERLAPS, AND GAPS.** Part of the

Attorneys in Your Area**[Law Office of Richard Sax](#)***Santa Rosa, CA*

The best real estate & litigation services for 25 yrs in a focused, creative & cost-effective manner

[Law Office of Leonard A. Rifkind](#)*San Rafael, CA*

Real Estate*Land

Use*Business

Law*Litigation*Transactions

throughout the Bay Area

415-485-2200

Services in Your Area**[U.S. Legal Forms, Inc.](#)**

State-Specific Real Estate Forms Download Online at [USlegalforms.com!](#)

[Additional Services](#)

boundary line certification, most surveys include a statement that unless the surveyor says otherwise, there are no discrepancies between the boundary lines of your property and the adjoining property. This is especially pertinent if your property is continuous with alleys, roads, highways, or streets.

3. **RIGHTS-OF-WAY, EASEMENTS, AND ABANDONED ROADS.** A survey will show all the conditions imposed by law that are reflected in your property's title report and other agreements. If your property blocks your neighbor's access to the road, for example, there may be an old agreement that gives your neighbor the right to walk across your yard to the street.
4. **PONDS, RIVERS, CREEKS, STREAMS, WELLS, AND LAKES.** The typical survey reports visible or surface waters only. Underground waters and wetlands are topics that are better covered by other professional inspections.
5. **JOINT DRIVEWAYS, PARTY WALLS, RIGHTS-OF-SUPPORT, ENCROACHMENTS, OVERHANGS, OR PROJECTIONS.** Unbeknownst to you or your next-door neighbor, you may have an obligation by law to support your neighbor's driveway by maintaining your own.
6. **EXISTING IMPROVEMENTS.** The surveyor will usually certify that the buildings and other improvements, alterations, and repairs to your property that exist at the time of the survey are not in violation of laws or other restrictions such as those regarding height, bulk, dimension, frontage, building lines, set-backs, and parking. Of course, the surveyor will also tell you if your latest improvement is in violation of a local ordinance or other law, which will put you on notice that a change is in order.
7. **WATER, ELECTRIC, GAS, TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH PIPES, DRAINS, WIRES, CABLES, VAULTS, MANHOLE COVERS, CATCHBASINS, LINES, AND POLES.** Poles and above-ground wires are obvious, but the

surveyor can usually report on the existence of underground cables and drains, as well, if the information is provided to him or her by your utility companies and municipality. Such information is important for two reasons. A utility company may have the right to use a portion of your property for upkeep of utility lines, and may have a say in how tall you let your trees grow, for instance. Also, knowing the exact location of underground utilities is critical before any excavation or construction begins.

8. **CEMETERIES.** It is unlikely that unbeknownst to you there is an old family burial ground in your back yard. The survey will show the exact location of any old cemeteries on your plat.
9. **ACCESS, INGRESS AND EGRESS.** Your survey should state, at a minimum, whether there is physical vehicular ingress and egress to an open public street. It may also specify the adequacy of access for a particular purpose, such as delivery trucks, emergency vehicles such as fire trucks, and driveways for tenants.
10. **ZONING CLASSIFICATION.** You probably know whether your property is zoned for residential or light industrial use. But you may be surprised to discover that your zoning classification puts specific restrictions on how you use your property. This part of the survey simply reports your zoning jurisdiction and classification. Once you have your completed and certified survey, you may want to consult an attorney about whether you are using your property in conformance with zoning ordinances or for other advice about the legal ramifications of your property survey.

Attorneys in Your Area

[Law Office of Richard Sax](#) - Santa Rosa, CA

The best real estate & litigation services for 25 yrs in a focused, creative & cost-effective manner

[Law Office of Leonard A. Rifkind](#) - San Rafael, CA

Real Estate*Land Use*Business Law*Litigation*Transactions throughout the Bay Area
415-485-2200

Services

[WESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY](#)

[COLLEGE OF LAW](#): On-Site Legal Clinic gives students the opportunity to provide legal assistance to members of the Orange County, CA community.

[U.S. Legal Forms, Inc.](#): ** Over

32,000 Legal Forms Online **
Preparing the perfect legal document is just minutes away with

USlegalforms.com. Free Previews.

[Wills, Divorce, Incorporation & More:](#)

Fast and friendly service from LegalZoom, the #1 online legal document service.

Real Estate Center	Tenants' Rights	Landlords	Home Ownership						
Findlaw for the Public	FindLaw for the Public	Accidents and Injuries	Bankruptcy & Debt	Criminal Law	Divorce & Family Law Center	DUI / DWI	Employee Rights Center	Real Estate Center	More Topics...

Copyright © 2005 FindLaw. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED [Privacy Policy](#) [Disclaimer](#)

[About FindLaw](#) [Advertise on FindLaw](#)