

# FEDERAL STANDARD ABSTRACT

## TITLE NEWS

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### The Surprising Significance of Surveyors

Have you ever walked or driven by two people standing in the middle of the street donning construction hats hovering over a camera-tripod contraption (correct term = theodolite)? Do you wonder what they are fixing their gazes upon as they look through the theodolite lens with an intensity rarely seen on most construction hat-wearing workers??

What exactly surveyors do is a mystery to the majority of people in this country, and most individuals probably have not taken the time to find out more about the undiscovered occupation of land surveying. Only during the process of purchasing a home will an individual ever have to deal with a surveyor. According to a *Newsday* article, "Establishing Boundaries" (Merritt, Jim, *Newsday*, August 5, 2005), New York City property lines are pretty established and rarely disputed due to over 350 years of surveys. However, "as you get into areas that are still rural or finally being developed, there are problems that have to be resolved" (*Newsday*, 8/5/05).

During property-line disputes, a surveyor's expertise is necessary and invaluable to the determination of 'where does my property start' and 'where does yours begin'?

"Physical features on a property, including a garage, shed or other building are located, though the surveyor won't rule on who actually owns a particular structure. 'We don't determine the ownership,' Malcolm Shaw, a surveyor for the City of New York, says. 'All we do is locate where (the structure) is relative to the property line.'"

Surveyors are basically land detectives, looking through old records to research through old surveys, going out and doing field work by compiling information from evidence left on the land by past surveyors, such as markers, and processing and validating data. Land Surveyors can help not only help avoid disputes but also to resolve them as well. No longer is information collection dependent on the theodolite or the prism pole, but these days, information is compiled by high-precision GPS-equipment, laser scanning systems, and GIS software and hardware. Cutting edge technology now allows a survey or map to be completed within hours instead of days. . Surveyors can appear as an expert witness in court and assumes full responsibility for the accuracy of his or her work.

If you need to hire a surveyor in New York State, visit the New York State Association of Professional Land Surveyors website at [www.nysapls.net](http://www.nysapls.net). Most surveys run from \$450.00 to \$650.00. In addition, if your objective is to become a surveyor, visit the National Society of Professional Surveyors website at [www.surveyingcareer.com](http://www.surveyingcareer.com).

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