WHAT ARE SURVEY MARKS?

Survey marks support billions of dollars of investment, property rights and infrastructure. There are many types of survey marks used for various proposes.

PERMANENT SURVEY MARKS

Permanent survey marks are fundamental marks that define location for surveying, mapping and engineering projects. Uses include housing developments, new road and bridge construction, improving railways and environmental mapping.

CADAstral SURVEY MARKS

Cadastral survey marks are used to define property boundaries. Survey marks near properties provide an accurate and reliable reference to locate boundaries. Many cadastral marks are buried – usually between 0.5 and 1 metre from a property corner.

WHY PROTECT SURVEY MARKS?

Survey marks provide a wealth of important information to a wide range of people in the community. They are used to support the surveying of property boundaries, but are also important to engineering, road building, mapping and other land surveys. The loss of survey marks can significantly degrade the integrity of the legal property boundaries and impact on the costs of development projects that depend on position and height.

HOW SURVEY MARKS ARE LOST

Over the last decade in excess of $1 million worth of permanent survey marks have been destroyed in NSW per year*. This does not include the loss in value of destroyed cadastral marks or the lost value to the community and industry that survey marks provide. Survey marks are usually destroyed by development activity, particularly:

- road works and footpath construction
- roadside slashing
- shopping mall developments
- street beautification projects
- underground utility upgrade or replacement
  - gas
  - water
  - electricity
  - telecommunication cable installation.

* Based upon cost of mark placement and survey

It is in everyone’s interest to take care of SURVEY MARKS
SURVEY MARKS
NEED TO BE RELOCATED

It is inevitable that survey marks will be destroyed from time to time by various types of works, e.g. permanent marks and reference marks may be obliterated in a mall redevelopment.

There are procedures in place for times when a survey mark has to be removed or replaced. The Surveyor General has guidelines for the replacement of survey marks. See the Surveyor General’s Direction No 11. “Preservation of Survey Infrastructure” on the LPI website www.lpi.nsw.gov.au

DESTRUCTION OR REMOVAL
CAN COST $$$

The removal or destruction of survey marks is costly to the community. Section 24(1) of the Surveying and Spatial Information Act 2002 states that a person must not remove, damage, destroy, displace, obliterate or deface any survey mark unless authorised to do so by the Surveyor General. A person found guilty of breaching the Act by a Court, may be required to pay a penalty up to $20,000.

A destroyed survey mark

SURVEY MARKS–
WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Paint

Yellow/white paint on the mark, or surrounding features.

Identification plates

Identification plates in rural areas help to locate permanent survey marks.

Star picket

Painted star pickets in rural areas may indicate a survey mark in the vicinity.

Tree blaze

A blazed tree may indicate a permanent mark or a cadastral boundary corner is located near by. It is most common in rural areas.

Alignment marks

Alignment stones, posts, pins and old stone kerbs are important cadastral marks.

HOW TO PROTECT
SURVEY MARKS

BEFORE WORKS COMMENCE

Find out if there are survey marks located in the area of interest by:
1. viewing the survey mark layer in the Spatial Information Exchange – Six Lite web page www.six.nsw.gov.au
2. contacting Survey Services, LPI, who will advise the location and status of survey marks in the area
3. inspecting the site, paying particular attention to survey marks located in the footpath/kerb and gutter.

If no survey marks are affected commence works.

IF SURVEY MARKS IN THE AREA

The locality sketch plan (Survey Mark Sketches) should be downloaded from the LPI Online Shop http://shop.lands.nsw.gov.au see – Specialised Searches.

IF SURVEY MARKS ARE LIKELY TO BE DISTURBED OR DESTROYED

Avoid disturbing or destroying survey marks by:
1. diverting works to avoid disturbing the marks or
2. contacting a Registered Surveyor to place and survey a mark at a more suitable site nearby to maintain survey integrity.

Any survey necessary to recover the position of survey marks proposed to be destroyed may only be undertaken by a surveyor registered under the Surveying and Spatial Information Act 2002 or by survey staff authorised by the Surveyor General.

REPORT SURVEY MARKS AT RISK OF BEING DESTROYED


FOR MORE INFORMATION

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