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LOCAL REAL ESTATE

NO BOUNDARIES *Can you find your yard?*

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IT SEEMS LIKE A SIMPLE QUESTION, but do you really know the answer? Where is your yard? What do you really own? Do you own everything inside your fence or everything outside of your neighbor's fence? Do you own up to where you've always mowed, or, do you own up to where the tree line is? Do you own to where the utility pole is or to where the electric box is located? Do you know the answer?

The answer is: none of the above. Unless you know where your property corners are located, you don't know what you own, or how to find your own yard. There is a simple solution to this problem- have a boundary survey performed on your property.

A boundary survey is a survey that is performed to Missouri Minimum Standards in which the property corners are located, verified or reestablished. Most property corners are located by a survey monument, which is typically an 18-inch long iron pipe or rebar, that is located below ground level. The biggest problem is that even though many property corners already exist, most property owners don't know where their monuments are located.

Professional Land Surveyors are licensed through the state to determine the location of property corners. Surveyors use recorded information available through the county, along with records provided through the Department of Natural Resources, to determine the precise location of your

property corners. That information can then be used to establish the "line" that exists between the two corners, which in turn aides in the establishment of your property.

Once property corners are located and established, they can be used to build improvements, such as a fence. Many times, people have fences installed (which can cost thousands of dollars) without knowing where their corners are located. Building a fence, without knowing what you really own can cause potential problems down the road. Save yourself some time and a headache by building in the right place.

A boundary survey is typically \$400-\$500, depending upon the age of your subdivision. The older the subdivision is, the more field work and research are needed in order to perform the survey to the state requirements.

Most people don't think about the consequences that can occur down the road by building a fence in the wrong yard. When you go to sell your home, or purchase a home, fencing can become an issue. If you find out that you built your fence on your neighbor's property, you can be asked to move it onto your own property- which we know can be labor intensive and expensive. If your neighbor happens to have their fence on your property - you're faced with a dilemma: do you "ignore" the situation and continue to pay for the land that they are using or do you ask them to move it and potentially start the beginning of a Hatfield and McCoy situation?



The answer is simple- make it known what you own. Have a boundary survey performed so that you can find your own yard. A valuable resource in helping you locate a Professional Land Surveyor would be your Realtor.

For a list of Realtors in your area, visit the St. Louis Association of Realtors' website at www.stlrealtors.com.

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