

# BOUNDARIES

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The Alberta Land Surveyors' Association (ALSA), established in 1910, is a self-governing professional association legislated under the *Land Surveyors Act*.

The Association regulates the practice of land surveying for the protection of the public and administration of the profession.

## **New Foundation and Garage Move Costs \$5,000**

A Calgary landowner was forced to pay \$5,000 to move a garage that was partially built on his neighbor's property. The landowner didn't build the garage; he inherited the problem when he purchased the property.

"It is a common problem," says Bill Pang, a Calgary area Alberta Land Surveyor. "Building a garage is a common undertaking by many homeowners. But, how many people think of getting their property surveyed first to determine exactly where the boundaries are? Often, as in this case, the person building the garage assumed the fence was the boundary line?"

Several years ago a property owner in south-east Calgary decided to build a new garage. He guessed that the fence was located on the property line. He poured the foundation and erected the garage with the proper distance between the fence and the foundation.

Everything was fine until the house was sold. The new owner had quite a surprise. The fence was not on the property line. It was 2.07 metres onto the adjacent lot and the garage and foundation extended 1.06 metres over the property line.

The neighbor wasn't happy and the new owner certainly wasn't happy. The foundation and garage had to be moved by over two metres. In the end it was necessary to pour a new foundation and move the garage onto the new concrete at a cost of over \$5,000.

Who pays? Certainly not the person who sold the property, he received his money and moved to Vancouver. The neighbor wanted the garage moved and it wasn't his responsibility. The purchaser of the property was saddled with the additional \$5,000 cost.

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## **For More Information**

This newsletter is published by the Alberta Land Surveyors' Association as a public service. If you would like to receive a copy of *Boundaries*, please contact us at [info@alsa.ab.ca](mailto:info@alsa.ab.ca) or 1-800-665-ALSA.

*Boundaries* is also online at [www.alsa.ab.ca/GeneralInfo/Boundaries.htm](http://www.alsa.ab.ca/GeneralInfo/Boundaries.htm)

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“The entire matter could have been avoided quite easily,” says Pang. “If the garage builder had arranged a survey first, he would have known and the garage could have been built in the location in first place. The cost of a survey would have been small compared to the cost of fixing the problem.”

Many people are misled by the fact that the municipal building inspector may inspect the new garage and approve the construction giving people the false impression it is built in the proper location. The building inspectors are not surveyors and landowners should have their property lines located by an Alberta Land Surveyor prior to construction.

“Anyone purchasing property should insist on a Real Property Report prepared by an Alberta Land Surveyor. That way, any similar problems are identified before a sale is concluded and appropriate changes can be made. A purchaser doesn’t need these kinds of surprises,” concludes Mr. Pang.

## Alberta Land Surveyors Join Alberta’s Promise



The Alberta Land Surveyors' Association (www.alsa.ab.ca) is proud to be a member of Alberta’s Promise.

Alberta's Promise (www.albertaspromise.org) is a movement to inspire Albertans to direct more resources to benefit our children and youth. Alberta's Promise helps communities, businesses, service clubs, foundations and agencies to work together to benefit our young people.

The Alberta Land Surveyors’ Association sponsors the Made-to-Measure crate through the Science Alberta Foundation (www.sciencealberta.org). What do adventure, history, the outdoors and your own backyard all have in common? Math! Grade 8 students use problem-solving skills and other math concepts to explore Alberta’s past and present through the eyes of a land surveyor.

The Association is presenting the first Trig-Alta Math Challenge (www.trigalta.ab.ca) on December 11, 2007. The Trig-Alta Challenge is a math contest aimed at Alberta Grade 11 Pure Math students and based on content primarily included in the Grade 10 Pure Math curriculum. Trig-Alta shows students how, in a real-world setting, Alberta Land Surveyors use mathematics in everyday situations.

At the post-secondary level, the Alberta Land Surveyors’ Association offers twelve scholarships worth over \$20,000 every year to students at universities and technical schools.

The little red wagon symbolizes our commitment to make Alberta the best place in the world to raise our children and youth.

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## Survey Accuracy

Question: What is the tolerance i.e. plus or minus - or if you will excuse the term 'margin for error' of a municipal residential survey?

Reply: While surveying instruments and technology have improved tremendously over the last one hundred years or more, they are not, and never can be, perfect. That is, there is still a “margin of error” or level of accuracy that is inevitable in any survey.

For boundary surveys, the level of accuracy that an Alberta Land Surveyor must achieve is defined in the Alberta Land Surveyors' Association's Manual of Standard Practice. For new surveys consisting of the surveyor's own work, the minimum accuracy standard is 1:7,500 or 0.02 metres. When closing on work performed by other surveyors, the minimum accuracy standard is 1:5,000 or 0.02 metres.

What does 1:7,500 or 1:5,000 mean? These numbers are a ratio describing the maximum error allowed over a specified distance. So 1:7,500 means there is an allowable error of one centimere over a distance of 7,500 centimetres.

## In the News around the World

[Systematic survey to solve land conflicts](#), Uganda

[Whose land? Water can muddy the issue](#), Orlando

[Tuba pushes for approval of cadastral survey](#), Philippines

[Houses burnt down after land dispute](#), India



## Free Brochures

“*The Real Property Report*,” “*Understanding Easements and Rights of Way*,” “*Alberta’s Subdivision Process*,” and “*I destroyed survey evidence—a practical guide to survey markers for the homeowner, handyman and contractor*” are free brochures available from the ALSA and can be ordered by visiting our website, [www.alsa.ab.ca](http://www.alsa.ab.ca)

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