



Bonnema Surveys

Professional Land Surveying Services

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Section Corner Remonumentation: An Important Task

Bonnema Surveys Inc. has done extensive Section Corner Remonumentation throughout Southwestern Minnesota. The United States Rectangular Survey is a system that was invented by Thomas Jefferson and it divides real estate into sections and townships. Surveying this continent into Townships, Sections and Quarter Sections was a massive task undertaken by the Federal Government. There were over 300,000 sections corners placed in Minnesota soil alone. Seventy percent (70%) of these section corners remain buried under 120 years of road building, sedimentation, and changes in the landscape.

Bonnema Surveys specializes in the very unique work of recovering these section corner monuments (a.k.a. remonumentation). Section corner remonumentation work should be done with great care because all property line locations are dependent on section corner location. Remonumentation is very important work that should not be done as a sideline to other activities. Frequently, during the road construction process, section corner remonumentation is ignored, or done inadequately. The State of Minnesota Statute Chapter 160.15 clearly states that, “the road authority having jurisdiction over the highway or street shall provide for the permanent marking of the corners” (see Page 2).



Bonnema Surveys Section Corner Recovery Efforts
(the found section corner monuments lie in the foreground)

Bonnema Surveys Inc. has provided Section Corner remonumentation services to the State of Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) over the past 18 years. We have completed 16 remonumentation projects and we have reestablished over 2,000 section corners.

Bonnema Surveys Inc.

Bonnema Surveys Inc. is a small company and we intend to stay that way. Being a small business allows us to give more personal service to our clients. We have discovered that a smaller organization of well-experienced personnel leads to a more productive and enjoyable work environment.



Duane A. Bonnema, the owner of Bonnema Surveys Inc., enjoys the small company environment, because it allows him, as a professional, to keep in touch with what is happening in his service-oriented company. Duane meets with his employees every morning to review projects and plan upcoming work. Duane states, “as a licensed professional, it is my responsibility to review all the surveying work before it is delivered to our clients.” Duane has discovered that an experienced employee with good equipment can tackle an enormous workload when not encumbered by inexperienced help or too much bureaucracy. Ten years ago, Bonnema Surveys Inc. invested in the equipment required to convert to 1-man surveying crews. Our field equipment list includes: five “one man total stations”, and 15 GPS (global positioning system) units. Currently, we have tremendous versatility in our company because most of our employees are capable of working both in the office and in the field.

Chapter Title: ROADS, GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section: 160.15 Preserving Section or Quarter-Section Corners.

Subdivision 1. Permanent marking of corners. Whenever the construction, reconstruction, or maintenance of a public street or highway causes the destruction or obliteration of a known section or quarter-section corner marker or monument, the road authority having jurisdiction over the highway or street shall provide for the permanent marking of the corners and place reference or witness monuments so that the corners can be readily located.

Subdivision 2. Manner of placement. The permanent marking of the corners and establishment of reference or witness monuments must be in the manner following: At the exact location of the corner there must be placed a durable stone, concrete, or metal marker, placed so as not to be disturbed by routine maintenance activities. For a paved highway, a supplemental marker must be placed over the durable monument. The supplemental marker must be visible at the road surface and set in a manner so as not to be disturbed by routine snow plowing. When not practical or safe to set a corner marker in a highway surface, a durable metal marker may be set as a permanent witness monument on the section line or quarter-section line.

Subdivision 4. Filing of certificate. The land surveyor placing and establishing the markers or monuments shall, no later than one year after placing and establishing them, file a certificate to that effect in the office of the county surveyor, if the county maintains a full-time office, in the county or counties in which the markers or monuments were placed does not have a full-time office of the county surveyor, then the land surveyor shall record the certificate in the office of the county recorder of that county. Each certificate must contain only the record of markers and monuments at one corner.

Subdivision 5. Contents of certificate. The certificates must be on sheets of durable material, which must be 8-1/2 by 11 inches with a margin at the left for binding. The certificates must contain the following:

- (1) identification of section or quarter-section corner;
- (2) description of monument removed;
- (3) description of replacement monument;
- (4) reference ties or witness monuments;
- (5) statements relating to physical and parol evidence relating to history and authenticity of the corner monument;
- (6) date of remonumentation; and
- (7) certification by a registered land surveyor.

Subdivision 6. Cost of placing markers. The cost of placing the markers and monuments, including filing fees, must be paid out of the respective funds provided by law, or set aside for highway or street purposes.