

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q. How close can we build a structure near a ditch/drain?

A. No permanent structures may be built within 75 feet of any county regulated drain or tile without a variance.

Q. If I do not have a ditch running through my property, why am I paying assessment fees on a ditch?

A. All storm water runoff eventually goes to a body of water, e.g. stream, underground tile or an open ditch, all of which require periodic maintenance. Your ditch assessment fees go to a maintenance fund to pay for repairs such as ditch bank spraying and clearing.

Q. If I need my property surveyed, who do I call?

A. You call a Registered Land Surveyor. We do not do land private surveys.

Q. If I want a copy of my survey, where do I get one?

A. If the survey was recorded they will have a copy in the County Recorder's Office. If not, you will need to know the survey company that last surveyed your property and contact them.

Q. If I want to make an appointment with the Drainage Board, what do I need to do?

A. Call the Surveyor's Office at 260-925-2222 or the Drainage Board at 260-925-1928. We can discuss your issue, or concern, and determine if you need to be placed on the next meeting agenda. Please, be prepared to give a summary of your needs so that the Surveyor, and the Board, is prepared to address them.

Q. Where is your office located?

A. 100 S. Main St. Auburn IN. The Courthouse 1st floor (near the north entrance).

Useful links:

www.sjrbc.com St. Joseph River Basin Commission

www.mrbc.org Maumee River Basin Commission

What can I expect now that I have reported a drain tile issue?

Many factors are taken into consideration once the DeKalb County Surveyor's Office is notified of a possible problem.

- ❖ Maintenance Fund
 - Is the drain with an issue on an active maintenance fund? Call the office to determine if funds are available. Be prepared to give location of the issue and summary of the problem.
- ❖ Safety
 - Upon receipt of information, the field inspector is notified as quickly as possible of potential hazards. Access to the location can only be within county right-of-way unless the property owner gives permission to cross private property. Written notice must be given under Indiana Code 36-9-27-33 if unable to verbally inform the property owner.
- ❖ Benefit
 - When a county regulated drain or tile is in major disrepair and repair or reconstruction* are found to benefit a large portion of an area or population, the Drainage Board is informed and they direct the Surveyor's office on what action to take.
- ❖ Cost
 - Each drain that is on maintenance has its own fund that can only be used for the maintenance of that particular drain. Drain maintenance assessments are collected as needed are for general maintenance. Drain assessment payments are based on locations of watersheds, not necessarily the location of a drain. For example:
 - Spraying for brush and broad leaf weeds
 - Minor tile repairs
 - Fallen tree removal from ditches
 - Tile cleaning including bottom dipping of ditches
- ❖ Contractor Availability
 - To ensure consistent, competitive and quality repairs the Surveyor's office engages contractors with strong positive references, necessary equipment (for the required work) and a working knowledge of the task required.
 - Often times contractors work on private service work to ensure that they have continual income.
- ❖ Timing
 - Factors such as weather, crops, condition of land (frozen or extreme wetness) and other projects can impact the timing of projects to tiles and drains.

**Reconstruction projects require additional steps and formal approval*

Overview

The surveyor prepares, maintains, and keeps in their office a legal survey record book showing maps of sections, grants, subdivisions, or groups of such areas in sufficient detail so that the location of each is known. The surveyor also maintains a corner stone record book. The information is the basis for determining the location of parcels within the county. In addition, the surveyor supervises all drain construction, reconstruction, and maintenance. They serve as an ex officio member of the county drainage board and serve as a member of the county plan commission.