VyRal

A LeakReceipts Field Guide

LeakReceipts for Land Surveying

The Field Guide: where the money leaks, how to prove it, and how to close it

For: Land Surveying — Non-Field Hours

by VyRal Dynasty

LeakReceipts for Land Surveying The Field Guide: where the money leaks, how to prove it, and how to close it

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How every number in this book is labeled.

- **VERIFIED** means the figure comes from a named, dated source, and the source is printed next to it.
- **CALCULATED** means it is arithmetic on verified numbers or on your own numbers, and the math is shown.
- **ESTIMATE** means a reasoned range, and it is always called one.
- **STRUCTURAL** marks a standing rule of the trade (a law, a contract term, how the paperwork works), not a market figure.
- **STILL BEING MEASURED** means VyRal has not verified a figure yet, so no number is printed.

If a number is not labeled, it is a blank for you to fill from your own paper.

What this book is not. This is education, not legal, tax, accounting or financial advice. Where a fix says a professional decides, a professional decides. Nothing here says that any company, customer or person did anything wrong. The fixes show you how to check your own paper and ask in writing.

About how this book was made. This book was assembled with AI from VyRal's sourced research on this trade and checked against those sources. AI can make mistakes. Before you act on a figure, check it against the source printed beside it. Rules and rates change, and every figure carries its date for that reason.

Before you share any document with anyone, Vera included, black out account numbers, Social Security numbers and anything else you would not hand a stranger.

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The short answer for your trade

Nobody is underpaying you in this trade — the hours just never reach the invoice. Records research, adjoiner-deed review, and monument recovery are real, licensed professional work that national model rules and multiple state boards define as part of what a competent survey requires, not administrative overhead. But because most firms quote a single lump sum, those hours have no line item to defend, and they're exactly what get mentally shaved when a fee feels high before it's ever sent. The fix doesn't require winning an argument with anyone — it requires scoping the diligence before you quote, so the write-off becomes a decision you can see instead of a habit you can't.

Your leak map

Every leak this book covers, biggest first. The size grade is VyRal's research grade for how much money a leak tends to move in this trade. It is a grade, not a dollar figure. Your own paper sets the dollars.

#	Leak	Size grade	Evidence	Fixes
1	Non-Field Research Is Part of the Licensed Practice, Not Overhead	Major	VERIFIED	1
2	State Boards Require Adjoiner-Deed Research and Monument Recovery	Major	VERIFIED	1
3	Monument Recovery for Federal Lands Follows a Strict Evidence Hierarchy	Moderate	VERIFIED	1
4	The ALTA/NSPS Standard Confirms the Same Duty Nationally (For Title Surveys)	Moderate	VERIFIED	1
5	Instruments, Vehicles, and the License Itself (Pride Economy)	Not graded	STRUCTURAL	1
6	Self-Employment Tax (SECA) Boundary	Not graded	STRUCTURAL	1
7	This Is a Rare Internal Leak — No Counterparty Is Underpaying You	Not graded	STRUCTURAL	1
8	Qualifications-Based Selection Is a Real Counter to Racing the Fee Down	Moderate	STILL BEING MEASURED	1

Then there are 4 more leaks to check, each with its own fixes, in the chapter called More leaks to check.

What people in your trade say hurts

Before we built a single fix, we went and read what people in this trade say out loud: forums, trade press, regulators' complaint files and court records. These are the pains that kept coming up, the ones with the most sources first. If one of them is yours, you're not imagining it.

Retirements leave fewer licensed surveyors and crews to carry the work

Most openings in this trade come from people retiring, not from growth. With fewer licensed surveyors and trained crew chiefs, I carry more jobs myself, wait longer to hire, and pay more to keep a good crew, while clients still expect faster turnaround.

Found in 2 public sources; newest dated 2026-10-29. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Builders ask for extra stakes and re-stakes in the field, then refuse the change order

On a staking job the super asks my crew for more offsets or a layout that wasn't in the proposal. The crew does it to keep the job moving, and when the bill shows the extra, the builder pushes back. Surveyors say the fix is a signed restake form or per-stake price before anything goes in the ground.

Found in 1 public source; newest dated . VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Get your paper together

Every fix in this book starts with paper, not memory. Memory rounds in the other side's favor. Paper doesn't.

Pull the last 90 days. Put it all in one folder, paper or phone, and label each piece with its date. Black out account numbers and Social Security numbers before you share anything with anyone.

The paper that proves each leak:

- Your contracts, invoices, statements, pay records and the messages around them.

My folder checklist

Last 90 days of statements or pay records _____

Every contract or agreement I work under _____

Every invoice, ticket or settlement for the same 90 days _____

The messages that changed a price, a scope or a date _____

Leak 1: Non-Field Research Is Part of the Licensed Practice, Not Overhead

Size grade: Major · Evidence: VERIFIED

What it is. The national model rules that most state licensing boards draw from define land surveying practice to include the "authoritative interpretation of maps, deeds, and other land title documents to resolve conflicting data elements" — not just fieldwork.

Why it leaks. When a firm bills its obvious field hours but folds deed research, adjoiner-description review, and monument recovery into an unlined lump sum, it's giving away real, licensed professional work that the same national model rules define as part of the practice itself, not administrative overhead.

The number to hold it against. The national model rules define land surveying practice to include interpreting maps, deeds and title documents to resolve conflicting data, and acquiring field data. Source: NCEES Model Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 210.25, January 2024.

VERIFIED · Primary — the organisation's own figure

> **Ask yourself:** Does your invoice show a separate line for records research, or does it disappear into a single lump-sum number?

1. Records research and deed review buried in a lump sum, not billed as licensed work

Fix approved · leak evidence: Verified

Fix 1 — Do it yourself (free).

1. On your next quote, split the price into lines: records and deed research, adjoiner deed review, field work and monument recovery, office calculations and drafting.
2. Track the research hours on every job, even when the job is quoted as a lump sum. You need your own history to price the next one.
3. After 5–10 jobs, look at what research actually took against what you quoted for it.
4. If research keeps running over, raise that line on future quotes.
5. Put a line in your quote that says extra research (missing records, conflicting deeds) will be priced and approved before it is done.

Fix 2 — The words to send, under your own name. Fill in the brackets, keep a copy, and send it from your own email or by mail. Nobody sends it for you.

> Quote language (paste into your proposal):
>
> "Scope and fee for [PROJECT / ADDRESS]:
> 1. Records research — deeds, plats and adjoiner descriptions at all common boundaries: [AMOUNT]
> 2. Field work, including search for and recovery of existing monuments: [AMOUNT]
> 3. Calculations, drafting and final plat: [AMOUNT]
> Total: [AMOUNT]
>
> Records research is part of the professional practice of surveying, not overhead. If the record is missing, conflicting, or needs research beyond [NUMBER] hours, I will tell you what is needed and the added fee before doing it.
>
> [YOUR NAME], [LICENSE #], [FIRM NAME]"

Fix 3 — Done for you. **LeakReceipts · Billing Capture**

WE DO: turn your scoped hours into separate invoice and quote lines (research, field, office), track actual research time per job against what you quoted, and flag jobs where research ran over before the invoice goes out. YOU DO: set the price per line, approve each invoice, and talk to the client about extra research.

Keep it closed. Split every quote into research, field and office lines. Get a yes on extra research before you do it.

What this fix can't decide for you. Pricing is the surveyor's decision. Whether his state adopts the NCEES model definition is a state-board question.

My receipt for this leak			
Owed by my paper	Paid or billed	Gap (CALCULATED: owed – paid)	Fix 2 sent · answer

FREE FIRST CHAPTER

That's Leak 1 of 8.

The full Field Guide for Land Surveying walks through every leak on the map you just read: why it happens, the paper that proves it, and three fixes for each one — one you do yourself for free, the words to send under your own name, and what LeakReceipts can do for you while the decision stays yours.

Get the full guide:
leakreceipts.com/ebooks/land-surveying

Run it on your own numbers:
leakreceipts.com

WE WALK BY FAITH NOT BY SIGHT — 2 Corinthians 5:7