

Following is a brief description of each type with an example. The fact that an example is used does not mean that a project on the land described qualifies. The examples are for illustration purposes only.

US Government Survey System

A description using the US Government survey system is the most common land description in South Dakota. It is based on a set of two intersecting lines: principal meridians and baselines. Principal meridians run north and south. Baselines run east and west. The intersection of those divides a district into 24-square mile quadrangles, which are then divided into 6-mile-square townships. Townships are then divided into 36 sections (each approximately 1-mile square). From there, sections are subdivided into quarters and so on.

This type of legal description will include at a minimum the section and township containing the land. The township will be described based on where it is in relation to a principal meridian and baseline. From there, the section will usually be divided further to narrow down the property to a single owner.

An example of a rectangular survey system legal description is:

The Southeast Quarter of the Southeast Quarter (SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$) of Section Four (4), Township 95 North, Range 63 West of the 5th Principal Meridian, Charles Mix County, South Dakota.

Lot and Block

A lot and block legal description is created by recording a subdivision plat map in the land records. This map creates and names a subdivision. The map also shows and identifies all the parcels in the subdivision by lots and blocks.

An example of a lot and block legal description is:

Lot Five of Block Twenty-four in Milwaukee Land Company's Second Addition to the Town of Murdo McKenzie, now City of Murdo, Jones County, South Dakota.

Metes and Bounds

A metes and bounds description is the least common description in South Dakota. Its use is now restricted by statute. It starts by describing how to find the starting point of the land description (the "point of beginning") and then describing an outline of the property. It does that by setting out the direction each segment of the property line runs (referring to a compass direction) and how many feet long each segment is. The point of beginning is usually described by referring to a point identified by the US Government Survey System.

An example of a metes and bounds legal description is:

A parcel in Section 33, Township 2 South, Range 29 East of the Black Hills Meridian, Jones County, South Dakota, described as follows: Commencing at the corner of Sections 28, 29, 32, and 33, thence South 84 feet and 53 feet east to the Point of Beginning; Thence South 88° 30' East, 295.16 feet; Thence South 1 ° 30' West 295.16 feet; Thence North 88 ° 30' West, 295.16 feet; Thence North 1 ° 30' East, 295.16 feet to the Point of Beginning, containing 2 acres, more or less.

