

**GUIDELINES  
FOR  
WRITING LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS**

In order to help standardize and simplify the writing of legal descriptions, the following format should be followed as closely as possible. While it is recognized that each legal is unique because each property described is unique, adherence to this format should not be difficult and will result in a distinctive "style" which is easy to read, retrace, and recognize.

CONTENT:

**PREAMBLES:** Preambles should be generally descriptive of the area in which the specific parcel to be described is located, but include enough information so that there is no possibility of misallocating the land described. Cite reference maps and their recording information; reference to sectionalized land breakdown should be included only if there is no more recent description of your "parent parcel." Be clear and concise. If you are subdividing, for example, "Lot 2 and a portion of Lot 3 of Tract 12345, MB 67/8-9," say so in those words, not "a portion of Lots 2 and 3 of..." Generally, reference recording information on a map in this way; "...as shown by map on file in Book 123 at Pages 5 through 9, inclusive, records of Riverside County."

**NOTE:** Deeds used to be filed in Books of Deeds (now filed in Official Records), miscellaneous documents are recorded in "Official Records." Maps are recorded in Map Books (tracts), Parcel Map Books (parcel maps), and Records or Survey Books (records of survey), therefore, maps are NOT recorded in "Official Records of..."

**COMMENCING Versus BEGINNING:** If you are commencing your description at a point which is NOT on the boundary of the land you are describing, then use the term "COMMENCING at..." rather than "BEGINNING at..." This helps avoid confusion as to just what point is the "TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING" Your legal should have one, and only one, "BEGINNING." Also, if the description does not close on the same point from which you began, then the ending point should be differentiated by use of the term "POINT OF TERMINUS." I like to "commence" on all legals. If the