

The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (agency) requires location data in certain formats in order to perform a thorough search. Listed below are some suggestions for acquiring and/or determining the necessary location data.

1. Use a commercial mapping service to display the property on a map, after typing in the address in the search box. Right-click on the icon associated with the property and select the item from the list that will give you information on what exactly is at that location. This should result in a lat/long coordinate being displayed. This may not be totally accurate, but may be close enough for your purposes. If you zoom in and repeat the right-click, the lat/long point may become more accurate. Then use a commercial geographic location conversion service, to convert the lat/long to township, range and section. These 2 sets of location data, plus the 911 address, should all be entered into the open records request form. A form filled out in such a manner will provide all the location data that is required by the agency to effectively and efficiently execute searches on those types of databases.
2. Often the legal description of a property in North Dakota contains the township, range and section information of that property. County property tax websites are extremely useful for determining ownership and correct location data. **Note that parcel numbers are not considered adequate location data by the agency.**
3. The ND GIS Hub contains many layers that can be invoked at will. The layers that give the township, range and section information are under the Government Boundaries heading and are called PLSS Townships and PLSS Sections. The Counties layer is under this heading also. The lat/long coordinate of the map cursor (location) is always visible at the bottom of the screen, below the map. It is recommended that you zoom in to get the most accurate coordinate possible. The Tools feature, which is displayed on the map itself and not on the sides or margins, contains a number of items to assist you. The address search feature within it, is tied to the zoom and can be confusing when multiple dots appear on the map, so be careful if you use it. Aerial photo layers are located under the Imagery heading. The most recent ones for the entire state are from 2018, which can be more accurate than a commercial mapping service. The agency finds that visually matching the property as displayed on a commercial mapping service, with the ND GIS Hub map works well, if you know the commercial mapping service is pointing to the correct property. Street view often can be used in commercial mapping services to check that the indicated property is correct. The GIS Hub link is located on <https://deq.nd.gov/OpenRecords.aspx>. If the ND GIS Hub does not load, you may need to modify your Internet compatibility settings. If, after doing that, the ND GIS Hub still will not load, please check with your IT person.

**Please note that some agency databases require owner and business information rather than, or in addition to, location information, in order to perform searches. The agency encourages parties making requests to fill out the open records request form as thoroughly and accurately as possible, in order to produce the best results with the least delay.**