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Crown Land Patent Records: What You Need To Know

What is a Crown Patent?

A Crown Patent (sometimes called a Crown Grant or Letters Patent) is a document that is used to transfer Crown land into private ownership, subject to any reservations or conditions that the patent may contain. A Crown Patent may also be used to grant leasehold interests in Crown land (Crown land lease).

This fact sheet only deals with cases where Crown Patents have been used to transfer Crown land into private ownership.

The first Crown Patents in Ontario were issued in the 1790s and are still used today to transfer Crown land to private ownership.

What information does a Crown Patent contain?

A Crown Patent usually includes:

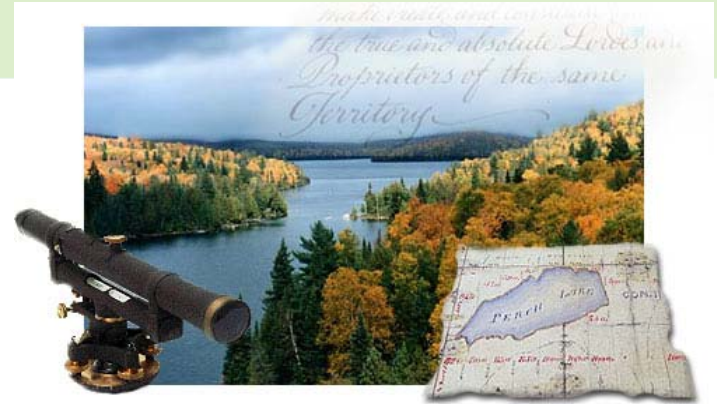
- the name of the original purchaser (also called the grantee or patentee)
- the purchase price
- a description of the land being granted
- the date of the patent
- any conditions or reservations that the patent was subject to when it was issued.

Do the reservations and conditions affect the ownership rights of my property today?

Reservations are rights in the land that were kept by the Crown, such as the right to construct roads. Conditions are limits that the Crown placed on the use of the land being sold. For example, some patents stated that the land was only to be used for agricultural purposes.

Most Crown Patents contain reservations and conditions, many of which are still valid today. Some reservations and conditions that still apply can be released. When reservations and conditions are released, rights previously reserved for the Crown are conveyed to the current owner, or the land is freed from limitations on its use. For example, if the Crown Patent reserved the trees on a property for the Crown, and the reservation is released, the trees become the property of the current landowner. There are cases where, as a result of changes in legislation, some reservations and conditions in patents no longer apply.

For more information on Crown Land Management, please visit ontario.ca/crownland.



Will getting a copy of the record of the Crown Patent for my property give me any additional rights?

No. A copy of the patent record shows the rights to the land that the Crown conveyed to the original purchaser, or reserved for the Crown, at the time the patent was issued. Obtaining a copy of the Crown Patent record will not change the rights you received when you bought or inherited the property.

Why does the Ministry of Natural Resources provide copies of Crown Patent records?

In many cases, Crown Patents are not available in the Land Registry Office. Until the mid-1960s, in the portions of Ontario governed by the registry system of land registration (primarily southern Ontario), the original Crown Patent document was sent to the buyer of the land, and it was the buyer's responsibility to arrange for registration of the patent at the Land Registry Office. Most buyers did not arrange for registration, and unless the original paper document was passed on to later owners, the original patent is not available.

The Ministry of Natural Resources maintains a microfiche record of every Crown Patent that has been issued. However, it is important to note that these records are not actual copies of the original patent, since copiers and printers did not exist for most of the last 200 years.

For a fee, copies of these records are available on request. A record of a Crown Patent confirms that a particular parcel of land was patented, and identifies the reservations or conditions that the original patent contained.

All patents issued since the mid-1960s, and all patents issued for land in the portions of Ontario governed by the land titles system of registration (primarily northern Ontario), have been sent to the appropriate Land Registry Office for registration. Copies of these patents are available from the [Land Registry Offices](#).

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Why would someone need a certified copy of the record of a Crown Patent?

If a Crown Patent has not been registered in the Land Registry Office, and a landowner wants to have the record of it registered today, the Land Registrar will only accept a certified copy for registration. Please note that the Land Registrar can only accept these documents for registration if the land is still under the registry system of land registration.

A certified copy can only be obtained from the Ministry of Natural Resources. It can then be registered in the Land Registry Office. Most requests for certified copies of Crown Patents come from lawyers who are dealing with transfers of private land and have discovered through a title search that the Crown Patent was never registered. Copies of Crown Patent records are also sometimes requested by people researching their family history.

How do I obtain a copy of a Crown Patent record?

Please send your completed [request form](#) by e-mail, letter, or fax to:

Ministry of Natural Resources
Crown Land Registry
P.O. Box 7000
300 Water Street, 5th Floor South
Peterborough, ON K9J 8M5

Telephone: 1-888-551-5552
Fax Number: 705-755-2181
E-mail: crownlandregistry@ontario.ca

Provide as much information as possible about the Crown Patent record being requested; specifically, the original (geographic) township name, and the lot and concession. If you know the name of the original grantee and the date of the patent, please also include them. The original grantee is the person to whom the Crown Patent was originally issued when the land was first transferred from the Crown.



Ministry of Natural Resources seal

How do I pay for a copy of a Crown Patent record?

Please **DO NOT** send payment with your request. You will be notified of the amount owing when your request has been processed. Payment can be made by VISA, MasterCard or American Express, or a cheque or money order payable to the **Minister of Finance**.

When you submit your request you will also be advised how long you may have to wait for your request to be processed.

Fees:

Uncertified copy (up to 3 pages): **\$32.00**
Certified copy (up to 3 pages): **\$50.00**
Per page over the first 3 pages: **\$4.00 each additional page**

For more information about ordering a copy of a Crown Land Patent record, please contact:
Ministry of Natural Resources, Crown Land Registry, at 1-888-551-5552.

ontario.ca/crownland