

## Free Sanborn Maps™

### Money Saving Tips for Environmental Due Diligence

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With the present economic conditions, the environment is becoming more competitive. A question I hear frequently is how can I save money without sacrificing quality. There are several ways to reduce cost and one of the easiest ways is to use FREE Sanborn Maps™.

Increasing many consultants are utilizing free Sanborn Maps™ by downloading or writing abstracts for their reports. Below are three money saving tips that could save you \$75 to \$135 or more depending on your project size. In most cases, you can do this without leaving your desk.

#### **Tip 1: View Digital Sanborn Maps™ Online**

ProQuest Information and Learning scanned Sanborn Maps™ from the collection at the Library of Congress. The *Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970*, consists of more than 660,000 maps for 12,000 American cities and towns. Access to this collection may be obtained through your local, state, or university libraries. Depending on your library policy, the digital maps may be accessed through library computers or via the internet using a pass code (from your desk top). To find out, ask your local librarian about their digital sanborn access policy.

For the state of Texas, every library has access to the digital maps through the TexShare program. Other states have similar programs. Below are a few links to an assortment of websites to view digital Sanborn Maps™. You will need a library account to gain access.

TexShare Databases (access to maps in Texas)

<http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/texshare/pl/remote.html>

Las Vegas-Clark County Library (access to maps nationwide)

<http://www.lvccld.org/>

Louisiana Library Connection Databases (access to maps in Louisiana)

<http://lplibcon.state.lib.la.us/index.php3>

The Seattle Public Library (access to nationwide)

<http://www.spl.org/>

Los Angeles Public Library

[www.lapl.org](http://www.lapl.org)

**Tip 2: Sanborn Maps™ available for download**

Many libraries around the country have scanned or are scanning Sanborn Maps™ that are in the public domain (1922 & older). Several thousands full-color digital reproduction Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps™ are publicly available for downloading. These public domain map collections were digitized from the printed maps held in the collections of the libraries around the country.

**Public Domain**

No discussion of digital projects is complete without a discussion of intellectual property law. Most of the scanning of Sanborn Maps in the public domain is through 1922. More scanning is anticipated, as current law states that materials published from 1923-1963 and whose copyright was not renewed are now in the public domain.

Links for downloadable maps:

Utah

<http://www.lib.utah.edu/portal/site/marriottlibrary/menuitem.350f2794f84fb3b29cf87354d1e916b9/?vgnextoid=9507da2ae25ea110VgnVCM1000001c9e619bRCRD&vgnextfmt=nomenu>

Information about Sanborn Maps

<http://lib.berkeley.edu/EART/snb-intr.html#intro>

University of California, Berkeley (view maps)

[http://lib.berkeley.edu/EART/sanborn\\_index.html](http://lib.berkeley.edu/EART/sanborn_index.html)

University of California, Santa Cruz

<http://bob.ucsc.edu/library/maps/sanborns.html>

University of Florida

<http://palmm.fcla.edu/sanborn/>

Digital Library of Georgia

<http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/sanborn/?Welcome>

Digital Collection of IUPUI University Library

<http://indiamond6.ulib.iupui.edu/sanbornJP2/>

**Tip 3: Hardcopy/Microfilm Sanborn Maps™**

The microfilm and/or the original hardcopy Sanborn Maps™ are available at most libraries in the reference section. There are two microfilm collections that are available. The first is the Chadwyck-Healy collection containing maps from the 1800's to the 1950's. The second is the



University Publications of America that covers the final years of revisions and map making from the 1950's to the 1990's. The original hardcopy maps are in color, large and easier to read. The maps can be viewed upon request from the reference librarian. Photocopying policies vary between libraries and are normally posted on their website. At some libraries, the maps may be photograph with a camera for personal research.

No one entity has a complete collection of Sanborn Maps™; however, there is a comprehensive inventory of Sanborn's produced for each city ([www.lib.berkeley.edu/EART/sanbul.html](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/EART/sanbul.html)). The Union List of Sanborn & Other Fire Insurance Maps was compiled by a group of librarian and is maintained by University of California at Berkeley. At the website, click on the state then city to see what map years were created.

For many states, the Proquest collection is mostly complete. However, in areas where coverage is spotty, the gaps can be filled by using the microfilm collection, hardcopy maps or other historical applications such as; historical aerial photographs, historical topographic maps, or city directories. To find additional sources for Sanborn Maps™, type sanborn maps on any web browser and you will be rewarded thousands of links.

*Scott Davis, is a Principal of GeoSearch, an environmental information company that provides current and historical environmental risk management information for property transactions. Scott provides project management and technical support for numerous environmental studies through out the United States. Reach him at (888) 396-0042.*