

What is a GIS and how can it help you?

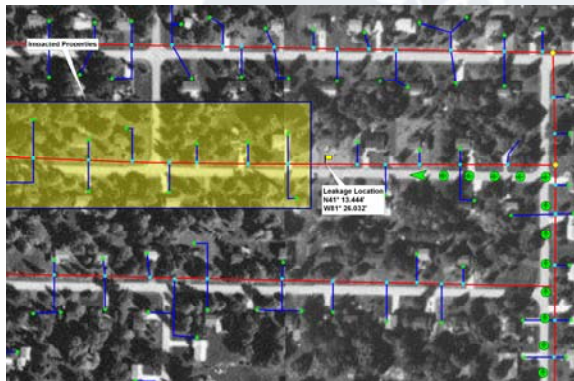
A Geographic Information System (GIS) is, quite simply, a tool for displaying and analyzing crucial information as it relates to a geographic location.

If you've ever scribbled notes on a map, added data annotations to a mapping software program, or even maintained a database that contains locational information such as addresses, you've created a simple GIS.

Full-featured GIS software programs such as *XMap 5.0 GIS Editor* provide a quantum leap in efficiency, delivering the ability to organize, query, and analyze your data, and to ascertain the answers you need for informed decision making and comprehensive research.

How is a GIS created?

Typically, a GIS is created by collecting all available and appropriate data, processing it into a usable form, and overlaying the resulting layers on a base map for a given area. This data may be derived from field-collected GPS log files, an existing spatial database, a list of objects with a known location or address, published GIS data layers, or by using object drawing and attribution tools within the GIS software.



When these data layers are in place, they provide a visual perspective that can help answer your fundamental who, what, where, and how questions. For example: Where is the location of the gas leak? How do we get our crews there? How many people live in the area and what schools, hospitals, businesses, or potential hazards are nearby? Where is our maintenance equipment and how can we quickly get it to the job site? Where are the structures that might be suitable for use as emergency shelters? And so on.

Making GIS accessible

Until recently, the cost of a full-featured GIS was prohibitive. Between software, labor costs and training, many businesses or agencies simply couldn't afford or justify the expense. Today, software and mapping companies like DeLorme are developing GIS products that can run on standard desktop or laptop computers using mainstream database technology with minimal maintenance and training required.

GIS provides significant benefits to countless types of users. Here are a few examples related to the energy, utility and telecom industries:

- Mapping critical infrastructure and assets such as pipelines or cables
- Integrating existing datasets for project planning and site assessment
- Creating high quality printed maps for presentations and proposals
- Efficiently deploying work crews with real-time GPS locating and navigation capabilities
- Coordinating with other agencies using efficient data communication tools

There is no question that an affordable, easily updated GIS can actually save what your business cannot afford to lose: money and time.

For more information on XMap 5.0, DeLorme's easy-to-use and affordable GIS solution, visit www.xmap.com or call 1-800-293-2389

