

Existing law provides that the owner of an estate that has no access to a public road may claim a right of passage over neighboring property to the nearest public road and provides that he is bound to indemnify his neighbor for the damage he may occasion.

New law provides that the owner of the enclosed estate is also bound to compensate his neighbor for the right of passage acquired.

Existing law provides for the extent, location, and relocation of passage, and the type of construction reasonably necessary for the exercise of the servitude.

Existing law provides that the right for indemnity against the owner of the enclosed estate may be lost by prescription, but that the accrual of this prescription has no effect on the right of passage.

New law includes utilities in the right of passage for enclosed estates. Further provides that the owner of the enclosed estate shall also be bound to compensate his neighbor for the right of passage acquired.

New law provides that new or additional maintenance burdens resulting from a utility servitude shall be the responsibility of the owner of the dominant estate.

New law requires utility crossings to be constructed in compliance with federal and state standards in order to mitigate hazards.

New law requires utility servitudes to coincide with the servitude of passage unless a different location is less injurious to the servient estate and requires the court to evaluate the location of the servitude prior to granting the servitude.

New law defines "utility" as a service such as electricity, water, sewer, gas, telephone, cable television, and other commonly used power and communication networks required for the operation of an ordinary household or business.

Existing law defines the "servitude of passage" as the right for the benefit of the dominant estate whereby persons, animals, or vehicles are permitted to pass through the servient estate. Unless the title provides otherwise, the extent of the right and the mode of its exercise shall be suitable for the kind of traffic necessary for the reasonable use of the dominant estate.

New law includes utilities in the definition of "servitude of passage".

Effective August 1, 2012.

(Amends C.C. Arts. 689, 690, 691, 692, 694, and 705; Adds C.C. Art. 696.1)