

The Marvels of Manhole Covers

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Stacked Manhole Covers at Briscover Factory in Changsha China

Sewer Covers are metal or concrete plates that cover the manholes. These days, they tend to be made from a combination of concrete and cast iron in order for them to be affordable yet sturdy. They are normally circular in shape and are removable by inserting a hook into the holes that are bored into them. These holes are called pick holes. They may also come equipped with a built in hook for ease in lifting off the cover.



Manhole Cover with Pick Holes

Sewer covers are very heavy and conceal the manholes beneath them. The manholes that dot the streets are holes, typically big enough to let men through them to carry out maintenance work in sewers and drains. The sewer covers are placed on top of these holes and prevent people on the street from falling into the manholes. Sometimes, they are locked in place to prevent unauthorized access into the drains.

Manhole Cover being Lifted with a Triangular Handle

In places where sewer covers are present along race tracks, the sewer covers are welded into place temporarily, since the vacuum created by the speed of the car is large enough to uproot the covers from their place. Sometimes, they are welded to prevent them from being stolen, as was seen in Philadelphia in the late nineties when the prices of scrap metal rose really high.

Sewer covers are not just objects of necessity that serve the purpose of closing the manholes. Many enthusiasts look upon them as work of art, often photographing unique and eclectic designs on the sewer covers.





“KANGQIAO GREAT WALL” Manhole Cover by Briscover.com in China

This has spawned an unusual activity called “drain spotting” that involves people taking photographs of different sewer covers spotted by them on the street. Some are round, some square, some rectangular while others are elliptical. Some of the sewer cover moulds have designs while others are plain with the Municipal Corporation’s name marked on them. Japan is a country with very artistic sewer covers, complete with flowers, birds or human designs in a variety of colors.

So you see, sewer covers might be something that you would not have even thought about before reading this article, despite having most certainly walked on them. The next time you are out and about, walking in your locality, stop to check the sewer covers and the patterns and lettering on them. You will soon discover that “Manhole Spotting” is a fascinating activity.

“The Marvels of Manhole Covers” was conceived and contributed by www.briscover.com in China. Editing and publishing were done by The Manhole Artist: Bobbi Mastrangelo also known as “The Grate Lady.” www.bobbimastrangelo.com.