

Laser Beam Refraction

Handy Tips & Advice

REFRACTION ISSUES

Product types: All Rotary and Cross line laser levels

Although there will always be the 0.1% of products that develop a fault, 99.9% of the technical enquiries we receive relating to “incorrect levels”, “random positions”, “out-of-level” or “Detector not picking up the beam correctly” transpire to being Refraction of the laser beam.

Laser levelling equipment is used by many different industries in various work-site environments. Users should be aware of the possibility of refraction problems, when using this type of equipment.

“Refraction” is the phenomenon where light is transmitted but moves direction when it passes from one medium to another e.g. through air then glass or water. This is why a pond of water appears shallower than it actually is or when you shine a torch at a window and the beam bounces off to another position. In the same way, this refraction can affect the correct setting-out, when using laser beams.

An easy example to understand is if, for example, a rotary laser is operated with a double-glazed window behind it. The true level position can be refracted and the deviation can be appreciable, even over small distances. In some instances, a double beam position can occur and the wrong level marked.

Our advice is to be aware of this and take appropriate care when setting out with your laser level, **both** indoor & outdoors.

A simple *fix* (if the laser cannot be moved or lowered) is to position a simple brown cardboard cover over the laser level on the side towards the refraction surface.

The following surfaces can potentially be problematic:

All glazing - single, double or treble glazed units. Patio / Bi-fold glass doors etc.

Glazed office partitioning.

Vehicle or Site Plant - glass windows & windscreens. (Curved windows are the worst)

Panel van sides - wet surfaces.

Mirrors & mirrored surfaces.

Stainless steel, shiny aluminum panels & reflective Celotex panels

Water – fountains, water displays, rivers, dams and weirs etc.

In addition, please be aware of the effects of amber & green warning beacons on plant & equipment. This “strobe effect” is a known problem and can affect all types of laser detectors to give erratic readings.

Our main advice is just to be site-aware when using laser levelling equipment, to ensure the reliable and accurate setting-out of your jobs.

It’s also important to understand that refraction of the beam, occurs with all lasers regardless of cost and or brand purchased.

CHECKING THE CALIBRATION

Controlled Test

If you believe the Laser is not giving accurate datums (after ensuring you have completely ruled out refraction of the laser beam explained on page 2), please carry out the following controlled test in your office, or another indoor location.

- Position the Laser Level on it's tripod in the **middle** of your office, garage, workshop etc... somewhere where you have space (10m or similar).
- Ensure there is no glazing or reflective surfaces in line of sight of the laser beam. This is to prevent the Refraction of the laser beam (See Refraction Issues section on page 2 for further details).
- Turn off all the lights and press the **ON/OFF** button once and the Laser Level will power on and begin automatically self-levelling horizontally.
- **No other button needs to be pressed for the laser to self level.**
- This self levelling process takes around 15-20 seconds and then the prism will start spinning and will project a laser beam 360 degrees around the room.
- With the laser level keypad facing your chest (towards you) walk to the left hand wall and mark the position of the laser beam on the wall.
- With the laser level keypad facing your chest (towards you) walk to the right hand wall and mark the position of the laser beam on the wall.
- Walk back to the laser and carefully twist the laser level round so the laser keypad now faces the left wall.
- **Be extremely careful not to overly disturb the laser when twisting it round to the point the tripod position moves or is kicked.**
- The laser will momentarily stop and re-start when turned round. This is normal. The laser will then self level again and project a laser beam 360 degrees around the room.
- Walk to the datum marks on both the left and right wall. You should see that the beam is hitting these marks.
- **If it is hitting the datum marks then the laser is operating correctly.**

If it's not hitting the datum mark's...

(and you have 100% ruled out Refraction and have not pressed Manual override)

Please contact the Service Department: **08000 869 769** who will be able to advise how to send it for repair / calibration.

CARE & MAINTENANCE

Protecting the Laser Level Kit

- Your Laser Level is precision levelling equipment and should be treated as such. Always handle with care and transport within the carry case provided.
- Always turn the laser level off when transporting or moving around the job site.
- Ensure the laser & accessories are clean and dry before storing in the case.
- If wet, dry well before storing and store the case and contents at room temperature. Failure to do so may void warranty.
- ***NEVER store the Laser Level Kit in a van, car or an unheated location (workshop / shed / garage / lockup etc.) overnight. The Laser Level Kit is designed to work in cold and wet conditions but it's the storage of the product when not in use that is critical. Keeping it in a secure heated building increases the usable life of the product and reduces the possibility of theft.***
- When the laser level is not in use or is being stored long term, it is highly recommended to remove the batteries or battery pack from the base of the laser as well as the batteries in the remote control and detector.
- Ensure the protective lighthouse glass is clean and free of dust and dirt at all times.
- Only use the supplied charger with the laser. The charger is for indoor use only. If the charger becomes damaged, stop using immediately and purchase a replacement. ***Never use a generic charger with this laser.***
- Always check the accuracy of the laser level before precision levelling is attempted. Failure to do so may result in inaccurate levels. See page 5 for further details.
- If the Laser Level has received a heavy impact or has been dropped, please ensure the calibration is checked.
- There are no user serviceable parts inside the Laser Level. Warranty void if tampered.

Laser Levels Online

**Unit 35, Bridge Business Centre, Beresford Way, Dunston Road,
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