



facilitair bedrijf amsterdam

N.A.P. = NORMAAL AMSTERDAMS PEIL = AMSTERDAM ORDNANCE DATUM

Amsterdam has received its name from the dam in the river Amstel, which dam served to keep the outer water from flooding the town. To enable ships to enter the town a lock was built that was closed when the outer water reached a certain height level. This water level seems to be the origin of the Amsterdam ordnance datum. Three centuries ago a standard ordnance datum was established in Amsterdam, based on the average high watermark of the Zuiderzee, which was Amsterdam's connection with the North Sea. This ordnance datum was - and is - the referral point for all constructions of any kind in the Netherlands. It was also adopted for a number of neighbouring countries.

1. **The bronze NAP knob**, mounted on a concrete pile, represents the exact zero level. You can actually touch it as you go downstairs.
2. **The three watercolumns represent:**
 - a. the high or low tide of the North Sea at this particular moment at IJmuiden
 - b. the high or low tide at Flushing (Vlissingen)
 - c. the highest level reached in the disastrous floods in 1953 in the Province of Zeeland: 4.55 meters above NAP.

It is interesting to realize as you stand next to the concrete NAP pile, you are actually below sea level! It should be said incidentally that the system is linked by telephone lines with measuring stations located in the North Sea.

3. **The cross section** in natural stone showing the Netherlands from East to West. We go from the Zuiderzee, which is now the IJsselmeer, to the North Sea. One gets a good impression of the countries unique geological structure.

Amsterdam was originally built on wooden piles. In medieval times these (round) piles rested on an upper layer of sand. Today concrete (square) piles are being driven into a more solid lower sand level.

The NAP project in the Amsterdam City Hall was designed and constructed by Louis van Gasteren and Kees van der Veer. It was officially inaugurated on 18 May 1988.