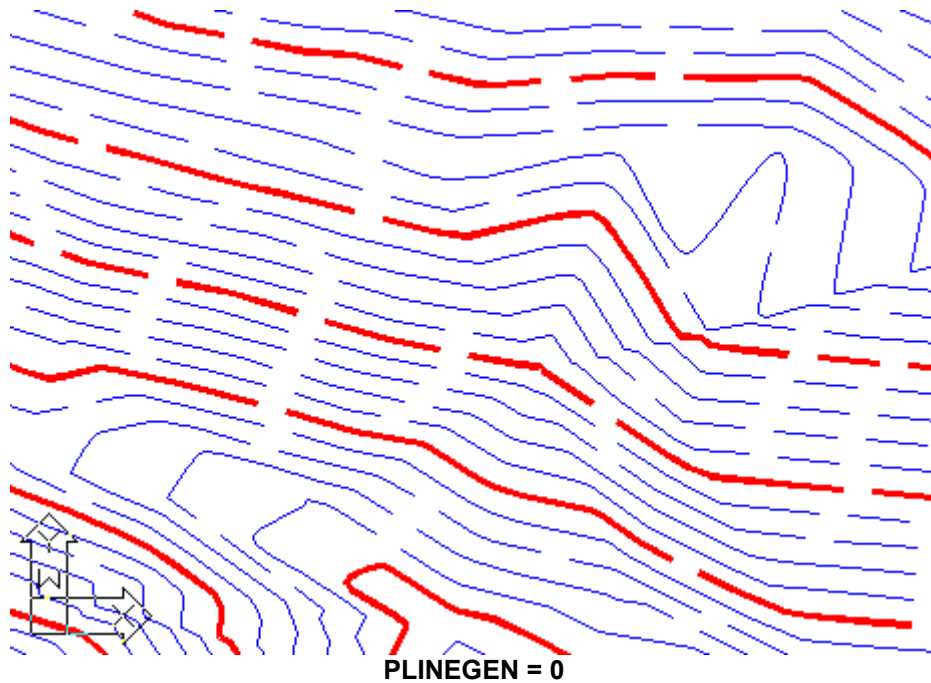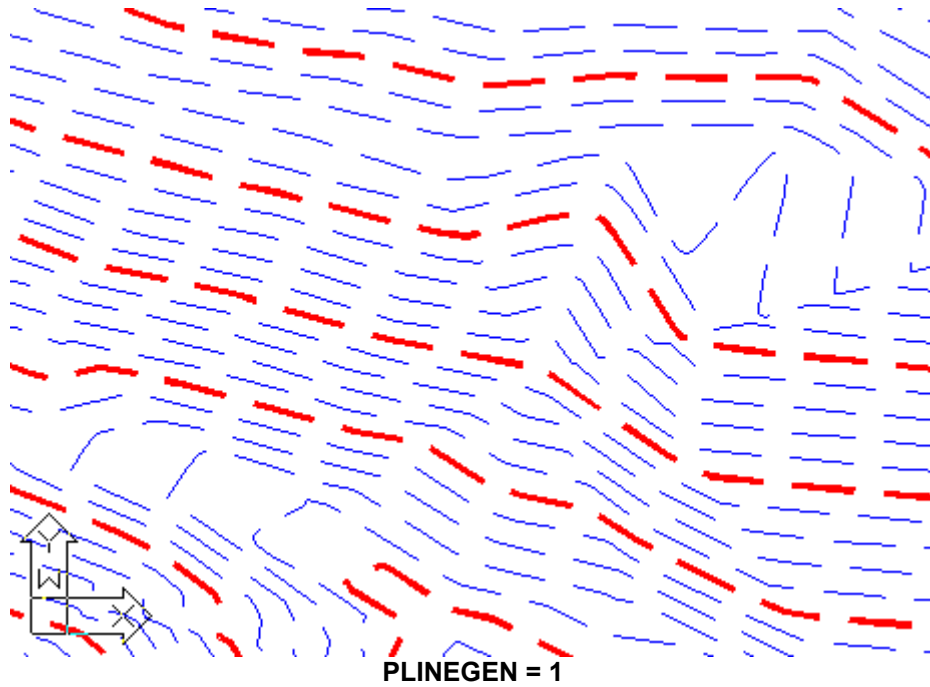# The effect of PLINEGEN on Contours

The AutoCAD system variable PLINEGEN can have a dramatic effect on the appearance of contours that are to be represented in a non-continuous linetype such as dashed.

The problem arises with PLINEGEN set to 0 when points along a polyline (such as a contour) are very close together. With PLINEGEN set to 0, AutoCAD resets the linetype mask at each vertex. This means on short segments the mask hasn't rolled enough to make a cut on the segment. The following example is a representation of SurvCADD generated contours (DASHED linetype) with PLINEGEN set to 0 before contouring.

PLINEGEN = 0

With PLINEGEN set to 1 before creating the contours, they are generated with the linetype generation turned on. In this case AutoCAD does not reset the linetype mask at each vertex and the resulting appearance is much better, as shown in the next graphic.

PLINEGEN = 1

Summary

In most situations involving polylines that have a non-continuous linetype, it is a good idea to turn PLINEGEN on before contouring. Simply type PLINEGEN at the command prompt and enter 1 to turn it on, or 0 to turn it off.