



# Good Deeds

News from the Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Chester County, PA 19380

Spring 2007

## Office Officials:

Terence Farrell, *Recorder of Deeds*  
Ruth C. Huganir, *Deputy Recorder*  
Edward C. Sweeney, *Solicitor*

## Mailing Address:

Chester County Recorder of Deeds  
121 N. Walnut Street, Suite 100  
P.O. Box 2748  
West Chester, PA 19380-0991

Telephone: 610-344-6330

Fax: 610-344-6408

E-mail: [Rodinfo@chesco.org](mailto:Rodinfo@chesco.org)

Website: [dsf.chesco.org/recorder](http://dsf.chesco.org/recorder)

Click on "Records Search" for records on line

## Hours:

The office is opened Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. However, same-day document recording stops at 4:00 p.m. on all days. The Record Room opens at 8:30 a.m., weather permitting.

## Fees:

For a full list of fees charged for services, see our website: [dsf.chesco.org/recorder](http://dsf.chesco.org/recorder)

## Reminder:

To save time and facilitate the filing and recording of documents in the Chester County Office of Recorder of Deeds, submitting parties should include two return self-addressed, stamped envelopes with the initial filing. The first envelope will be used to notify the submitting party the document has been received and the second envelope will be used to return the original recorded document. If return envelopes aren't included, the notification process will take longer to complete.

Prior Newsletters are available at [dsf.chesco.org/recorder](http://dsf.chesco.org/recorder)

## Recorder of Deeds Tackles Current Issues Affecting Land Records

Terence Farrell, Recorder of Deeds for Chester County participated in the Property Records Industry Association (PRIA) 2007 annual winter conference. PRIA is the standard setting organization for land records and is comprised of government and business land records professionals nation-wide.

One of the important topics discussed was Mr. Farrell's historic implementation of a multi-state e-Recording portal. Several states have state-wide e-Recording portals, but Farrell and M. Claire French of Monmouth County New Jersey have broken new ground in electronic records technology with their collaboration on a multi-state e-Recording portal (see article page 2).

A topic that concerns the public and government officials alike is keeping personal information - such as Social Security numbers or bank account numbers - off of public documents. PRIA conducted several panel discussions on how incorporating PRIA standards in state legislature and office practices are helping government officials reduce taxpayer costs while keeping a keen eye on security. Farrell and Deputy Recorder, Ruth Huganir, are members of the PRIA Security and Privacy Committee and participated in drafting model legislation to keep personal information off public records (see article page 2).

Also discussed was archival backup and disaster recovery. Hurricane Katrina's devastating effects on government offices and businesses along the Gulf Coast, along with terrorist threats, have made backup and recovery a hot topic among land records

professionals. Farrell instituted archival backup and disaster recovery in 2001 when he contracted with Tyler Technologies for the Eagle recording system. "Although we have redundant backup of our records, we assess our backup and recovery system continually in order to ensure that the public's records are safe and that, in the event a disaster occurs, our office will be able to continue operations without loss of public records," said Farrell.

Land and mortgage fraud are troubling all areas of the country and is occurring as close to home as the City of Philadelphia. Finding, recognizing and reporting land and mortgage fraud was a timely issue of discussion at PRIA and Farrell and Huganir brought back vital information and statistics for guarding against these types of fraud.

"Continuing education is one of the key components to ensuring that public government is alert and ready for any new events that affect their offices - whether they be technological or criminal," said Farrell.



*Terence Farrell,  
Recorder of Deeds*

## Interstate e-Recording Portal Proof-of-Concept is Underway

On May 3, 2007, Terence Farrell, Recorder of Deeds for Chester County, entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Claire French, Clerk of Monmouth County, New Jersey for the first multi-state eRecording portal. The portal will allow submitters from anywhere to submit their land records electronically to both New Jersey and Pennsylvania Recorder of Deeds offices at one website. Currently, the portal is the gateway of electronic documents for eleven New Jersey counties. Chester County is the first Pennsylvania county to join in the concept. "Inter-county government agreements are proven cost-saving measures of tax-payer dollars. By combining resources, we are able to save our taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars while moving our offices forward with the latest technology," said Farrell.

While attending the Property Records Industry Association conference last summer, Farrell and French discussed the possibility of joining forces and offering one portal to provide electronic document submissions to multiple counties in both their states. After months of



*Seated (l to r) Chester County Recorder of Deeds Terence Farrell, Monmouth County Chief Clerk M. Claire French. Standing (l to r) are the witnesses to the signing, Thomas Abrahamsen and Teri O'Connor.*

research and due diligence, Farrell and French have begun the ninety-day Proof of Concept phase of the multi-state eRecording portal.

The benefit to submitters is being able to submit documents to multiple counties in various states through one website. The benefit to Recorders is only having one integration to the back-end recording system, while receiving documents from all types of submission software. "We're starting out ahead of the game with an existing client base of New Jersey customers who want to submit documents to Pennsylvania," said Farrell. "Large banks and mortgage companies are already onboard with the portal and can now submit their documents to Chester County," said French.

Numerous Southeast Recorders of Deeds have expressed their intension to join the portal. As more Recorders join, the costs of the portal will be shared among the participating counties, which will result in more efficient recording of documents with less cost to the Recorders.

"We're delivering 21st Century government to the taxpayers of Chester County," said Farrell.

## e-Notary & e-Recording Update

Chester County Recorder of Deeds Terence Farrell has been appointed to participate in Phase II of Pennsylvania's eNotary Initiative. Phase I was begun in February 2006 with Chester County being one of four Pennsylvania counties chosen to participate. "We saw a successful start this year and expect more applications in 2007," commented Farrell. In 2006, 418 notaries applied for an eNotary seal in Pennsylvania. "As more submitters become familiar with the convenience and safety features of eNotarizing documents, the system will see more use," said Farrell.

During Phase II of the Initiative, the Department of State will allow other Recorders of Deeds to participate in registering e-Notaries. If these counties are capable, they will also participate in e-recording documents notarized by Pennsylvania e-Notaries. Farrell noted, "Since Phase I of the Initiative was so successful, our goal is to bring in any interested Recorders so that all Pennsylvania Recorders' offices can begin doing business via e-commerce."

**Over 1500 e-Recordings  
submitted in 1Q 2007!**



## 2007 Chester County Holidays

The Recorder of Deeds Office will be closed on the following recognized County holidays:

May 28 – Memorial Day  
July 4 – Independence Day  
September 3 – Labor Day  
November 6 – Election Day

November 12 – Veterans Day  
November 22 & 23 – Thanksgiving Holiday  
December 25 - Christmas