



# "WORKING TOGETHER"

Property Records Education Partners (PREP)

[PREP Newsletter](#)

[Volume 29 - October 2011](#)

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## PRIA Press Release: eRecording Counties Top 700 Mark

"The number of counties that are electronically recording documents surpassed 700 during the month of September according to Richard Bramhall, recent president of the Property Records Industry Association (PRIA). Electronic recording (eRecording) is the automated process in a land records office of receipt, examination, fee calculation and payment, endorsing of recording information and return of recorded electronic documents to the submitter. eRecording improves the quality of data,

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reduces turnaround times and provides significant cost savings for those who utilize it, when compared to a manual process." [Read complete press release.](#)

### Communication Tools you can Use - [PREP Blog](#) and [PRIA/PREP LinkedIn Group](#)

- See the new [PREP](#) logo - shown for the first time in this newsletter! We'll send this soon to our chapters and industry partners.
- Go to or subscribe to the [PREP Blog](#) and join the [PRIA/PREP LinkedIn Group](#)
- We try to put many of the [PREP Chapter Minutes/Agendas](#) on the [BLOG](#) when we receive them, so you all can track what is going on in other PREP Chapters. We also post daily articles of interest and legislation that may affect real property records and related industries - on both the [BLOG](#) and on [LinkedIn](#).

### News From PREP Chapters:

In this newsletter volume, we'll be highlighting **North Central Texas** and **Upstate South Carolina** PREP Chapters. Each PREP Newsletter will post the recent "minutes" or summaries from PREP Chapters. And you can also go directly to the [map](#) on the PRIA/PREP webpage and find all documents from Chapters across the country.

#### North Central Texas PREP:

Co-chairs: Government, Stacy Kemp at [skemp@co.collin.tx.us](mailto:skemp@co.collin.tx.us) and Business, Doug Hollowell, at [doug@integritytc.com](mailto:doug@integritytc.com)

The North Central Texas PREP Chapter met on 8/18/11. The primary speaker at this meeting was James Farris, from the Dallas FBI Mortgage Fraud Unit. Mr. Farris gave a presentation discussing mortgage fraud and the latest schemes. The biggest cause of mortgage fraud is a lack of personal integrity by the borrowers and industry professionals such as appraisers, lenders, real estate agents and builders. Texas real estate is not something to invest in as it is in California or Washington DC. When the FBI sees an investor buying multiple properties at approximately \$400,000 to \$700,000 a piece, it draws their attention. The biggest scheme at this time involves straw borrowers. [Read complete minutes.](#)

#### Upstate South Carolina PREP:

Co-chairs: Government, Courtney Willson at [cwillson@greenvillecounty.org](mailto:cwillson@greenvillecounty.org) and Business: Mark Rettinger at [jdtitlellc@yahoo.com](mailto:jdtitlellc@yahoo.com)

The Upstate South Carolina PREP meeting was held on August 16, 2011. Courtney Willson (Chapter Co-Chair) welcomed the group and introduced the speakers: Greenville County Auditor, Scott Case & Greenville County Tax Collector, Kevin Hunter. **The Greenville County Auditor**, Mr. Case provided an overview of the responsibilities of the Auditor's Office. He explained the structure of the various tax authorities and tax districts of Greenville County. The Auditor receives ownership records and millage rates from the tax authorities which the office then uses to generate tax bills for GC citizens. Mr. Case also briefly explained how the millage and taxes are calculated. Afterwards, he answered a few questions regarding reassessment and FILOS. **The Greenville County Tax Collector**, Mr. Hunter provided an overview of the responsibilities of the Tax Collector's

**Examples of PRIA's Products**  
["2010/11 PREP Chapter Topics"](#)  
["How to get Ready for eRecording"](#)  
[Bulk Records Access and Cost](#)  
 (other PRIA Standards and Publications)

### PREP Chapter Meetings Oct/Nov 2011

- Arizona
- Missouri
- Red River MN/ND
- South Carolina UP
- SE Minnesota
- NO California
- Nebraska
- Central Florida

### Contact Information

Do you have questions or suggestions on this newsletter or any updated information on co-chairs, emails, phone numbers etc. please contact us:  
[Carolyn Ableman](#)  
 PREP Coordinator  
[Mark Monacelli](#)  
 PRIA PREP Committee Co-Chair  
 Recorder  
 St Louis County, Minnesota  
[Nick Hacker](#)  
 PRIA PREP Committee Co-Chair  
 ALTA, Manager of Government Affairs

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Office. Unlike most other SC counties, the Greenville County Tax Collector is responsible for collecting payment for taxes as well as for collecting delinquent taxes. In addition, the Tax Collector's duties include seizing property for non-payment, testifying in court for delinquent taxes, suspending driver's licenses for failure to pay taxes, printing and mailing tax notices, conducting tax sales, and assisting customers with redemption issues. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 8. The Greenville County Clerk of Court and Assessor will be asked to speak at the next meeting if possible.

### Links to National News

[Fixed Mortgage Rates Change Little](#) - "Average fixed mortgage rates changed little for the second consecutive week amid mixed consumer confidence and housing data, according to Freddie Mac."

[Regulator Said to Mull Forgiving Mortgage Debt](#) - "The regulator for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac was reviewing a proposal to help troubled homeowners by forgiving a portion of their outstanding mortgage debt, Democrats in the House of Representatives said on Wednesday."

[Texas Counties Consider Suing MERS Over Mortgage Assignments, Filing Fees](#) - "Two Texas counties are contemplating a lawsuit against Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems for an alleged failure to pay mortgage assignment recording fees to local clerks' offices."

[Commercial Real Estate Players Expect Slow Recovery in 2012](#) - "Commercial real estate players say they expect a grindingly slow recovery of their business next year as economic conditions marginally improve."

[NY AG Expects 'Meaningful Relief' from Investigations of Mortgage Industry](#) - "New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman said he expects to obtain "real meaningful relief" from his investigation of the nation's largest banks and mortgage servicers."

### ALTA NEWS: ALTA Announces Membership Surpasses 4,000 to Set New Record

The [American Land Title Association](#) (ALTA), the national trade association representing members of the title insurance industry, reported during its Annual Convention in Charleston, S.C., that membership has surpassed more than 4,000 member companies to set an all-time record.

"Despite the prolonged economic downturn, professionals in the title insurance industry understand the value of association membership," said Anne Anastasi, ALTA's president. "It's with this increased support from our members that we strengthen the advocacy of the land title insurance industry. If we have learned anything from the foreclosure crisis, it is that title insurance is an important product that protects consumers, investors and lenders. It's through strong membership that we can promote an industry that legislators, regulators and other policymakers have come to know and respect."

ALTA boasts a diverse membership base, with the majority of our members being small-sized title agents that rely on the benefits provided by ALTA to succeed in the marketplace. "ALTA membership has increased more than

90 percent since 2001," said Jim Stipanovich, chair of ALTA's Membership Committee. "While attaining record membership is a significant milestone, it should be noted that we are not only attracting new members, we also retain a high percentage of members, illustrating that professionals in the title insurance industry value the advantages of being an ALTA member."

ALTA advocates on behalf of its members on a variety of issues while looking for ways to assist consumers. Over the past year, ALTA has worked closely with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) as it attempts to create a single, simpler mortgage disclosure form to help consumers comparison shop. The association also has worked closely with state land title associations to ban private transfer fees. "We have helped provide model legislation that prevents the spread of private transfer fee covenants, a predatory financial scheme that increases risk for homeowners, lenders, land title professionals and makes the transfer of property more costly," said Michelle Korsmo, chief executive officer of ALTA. "ALTA is also a proponent of creating a mortgage disclosure that includes accurate itemized estimates of costs allowing consumers to receive a complete view of their transaction. When you go out to dinner, your check doesn't list a total price, each item is listed giving you a breakdown of what you purchased. Consumers should have the same transparency when they obtain a mortgage."

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Please consider advertising in the PREP Newsletter. Your advertising dollars will not only pay for this level of distribution, but will also be supporting PRIA's mission and PREP Chapters across the country.

We are committed to broadening the PREP network in order to provide a larger audience to our business partners, so we need your financial support. Contact [Carolyn](#) (National PREP Coordinator) for advertising rates and more information.

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