



Carmella Sabaugh

Macomb County
Clerk/Register of Deeds

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Deputy Register of Deeds

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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County clerk uses 1846 law to fight fraud Electronic Entry Book Available in Macomb County, MI

The drafters of an 1846 law governing real estate records did not have the Internet in mind, but Macomb County Clerk / Register of Deeds Carmella Sabaugh is now using technology to comply by creating a register of deeds electronic entry book.

Sabaugh's new electronic entry book is available for free in the register of deeds office. Also free to search in the office is the public grantor/grantee index. On May 21 the entry book will also be available via the county clerk web site for a fee, where other public real estate records are already available. The fee to search one day of entry book records online will be \$5.



Macomb County Clerk / Register of
Deeds Carmella Sabaugh

The register of deeds office is open from 8:30 am – 5pm, Monday through Friday. The recording counter closes at 4:30 pm and documents received after 4:30 pm will be processed for recording the next business day.

Sabaugh also announced a new web interface for Macomb County public real estate records effective May 21. The fees and process for bulk purchase of real estate records are posted on Sabaugh's new and improved web site <http://www.macombcountymi.gov/clerksoffice>, click, "Register of Deeds Land Records" in the Searches section. Fees for individual online searches remain the same.

Clerk's Office

40 N. Main St.
Mount Clemens, MI 48043
586-469-5120
Fax: 586-783-8184

<http://www.macombcountymi.gov/clerksoffice>
clerksoffice@macombcountymi.gov

Fax-on-Demand

Michigan: 1-888-99-CLERK
Out-of-State: 310-575-5035

Register of Deeds

10 N. Main St.
Mount Clemens, MI 48043
586-469-5175
Fax: 586-469-5130

<http://www.macombcountymi.gov/registerdeeds>
registerdeeds@macombcountymi.gov

“[Carmella Sabaugh’s] system is the single most important step undertaken in the last several decades by any register in this state to stem the tide of real estate fraud,” according to the general counsel of a major title company.

“Accurate public record keeping reduces fraud and our new electronic entry book will help protect our residents,” said Sabaugh. “Anyone involved in a Macomb County real estate transaction now has added protection.”

An 1846 Michigan law requires registers of deeds to keep an entry book showing the date and time real estate documents are received, the document type and some other information. With the widespread use of computers in the last two decades, entry books were abandoned in many counties, including Macomb. However, computer systems were overwhelmed during the last housing boom and many registers of deeds fell behind, in some cases several months behind.

Real estate records are public and are filed at the register of deeds office. When you buy a house, a search is done at the register of deeds to make sure the seller really owns it to sell. If documents are not efficiently processed by registers of deeds, then one example of fraud is that a person could sell the same house twice. After selling the house the first time, the deed showing the first buyer as the owner would be sent to the register of deeds for recording. While the first buyer’s deed is being processed, the seller could find a second buyer. The second buyer would check the register of deeds and find no record of a prior sale because of delays in posting documents to the official registry at the register of deeds. After all paper work is finally processed by the register of deeds, the second buyer and the first buyer would realize they both bought the same house and the seller could be long gone with the money.

The electronic entry book prevents this problem because the second buyer would see the transaction involving the first buyer, even if the paper work wasn’t completely processed through the register of deeds official registry system. While the electronic entry book will post documents within 24 hours of receipt, the Macomb County register of deeds registry currently posts documents online within just three days of recording. Entry book records will always be available within 24 hours, while the official registry may be subject to delays when the housing market picks up again.