

Erie County intros 'E-Recording' for real estate

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By Jim Fink, Business First June 17, 2013

Erie County has become one of the first county's in New York to begin the shift towards electronic, or "E-Recording", of real estate transactions.

Erie County Clerk Chris Jacobs said the technology has been installed and tested that will enable law firms to file, initially, mortgages via the e-recording system. Deeds and other transactions will be accepted through e-recording at a later date.

By accepting e-recording transactions, Jacobs said it will save "time, paper and money for both the person closing on the mortgage and for the government responsible for the recording." It will also allow people to close their real estate deals at their attorney's office instead of at the "closing room" in the Erie County Clerk's office.

E-recording was approved by state lawmakers in September 2011. It took most clerk's offices more than one year to install, test and train on the system.

Electronic recording of mortgages, deeds and other transactions has been commonly used in other states for many years.

"New York state was pretty late to the game," Jacobs said.

Last year, the county clerk's office handled more than 70,000 mortgage and mortgage-related transactions, Jacobs said.

"Moving even some of that to paperless is huge in terms of efficiency," he said.

Jacobs has started an educational outreach effort to area law firms about the e-recording process.

"My guess is that within the next five years, electronic closings will be the norm, not the exception," Jacobs said.