

**By Grant Schulte**  
**Associated Press**

LINCOLN (AP)—Nebraska rang in 2013 on Tuesday with new laws that will increase county filing fees for mortgages, offer tax breaks for new data centers and allow golf cars to drive on roads near courses.

The measures are among 10 Nebraska state laws that went into effect on Jan. 1.

The new year ushered in an increase in county filing fees for mortgages, deeds, wills and other property documents.

Some of the increased revenue will help register-of-deed offices post more public documents online, while the rest will go to county general funds.

The law ends in 2018, a requirement that lawmakers added to force officials to show that they had used the money as intended and justify continuing the higher fees.

The fees will increase for the first time in 28 years, said Roger Keetle, a legislative aide for state Sen. John Wightman, of Lexington, who sponsored the bill.

“It’s a long overdue increase” for counties, Keetle said, because years of inflation have eroded the value of the fees and placed more pressure on counties’ general funds.

Counties will charge a \$10 fee for the first page of a filing and \$6 for each subsequent page, up from the current \$5-per-page charge on most documents. The law also will repeal a 50-cent indexing fee for lots that are recorded. Of the \$10 fee charged on the first page, \$2.50 will go into the register’s technology upgrade fund. For every page that costs \$5, the fund will collect 50 cents.

Lawmakers in previous years had resisted the proposal, but the measure gained support this year because it dedicates part of the money for technology upgrades in recorder offices. The money previously funneled into county general funds, allowing county officials to use it however they wanted.

Another law will allow special-interest motor vehicles in Nebraska to sport only one license plate. The law is aimed at specialty or classic cars that aren’t intended for regular travel. The law was supported by the Nebraska Corvette Association and other car-collector groups.

A third new tax incentive law sponsored by Bellevue Sen. Abbie Cornett is designed to attract data centers to Nebraska and encourage expansions, including one by internet search engine Yahoo! in LaVista, an Omaha suburb. The law offers property and sales-tax exemptions to firms in Nebraska.

Lawmakers and Gov. Dave Heineman also passed a law this year that will allow motorists to drive golf cars on roads that run adjacent and contiguous to golf courses, if the local county or city government approves. To use the golf cars on roads, operators must have a driver’s license and liability insurance.

The bill’s sponsor, Bancroft Sen. Lydia Brasch, told a legislative panel in January that she introduced the bill after she was approached by constituents in the towns of Oakland and Tekamah.

Kevin Brenneis, the owner of the Northridge Country Club in Tekamah, told lawmakers that golf cars on city streets became an issue after the city annexed part of the club’s golf course. Once the subdivision land was annexed, several roads that ran through the course became city streets.

“Now that they’ve annexed us, we would like to be able to continue our operations they were

before,” he testified in a January hearing.

Other laws that took effect Jan. 1 include:

LB 536: A law designed to give counties additional notice that property is changing hands because of a death.

LB 854: Gives businesses that have been dissolved up to five years to apply for reinstatement with the Nebraska secretary of state’s office.

LB 887: Reduces filing fees and changes other rules for Nebraska insurance companies.

LB 1058: Requires employers to send information about a worker’s eligibility for unemployment benefits to the state within 10 days of the Department of Labor requesting it.

LB 1091: Requires Nebraska retailers to collect a surcharge on prepaid cellphones and phone cards.

LB 1113: Sets rules in legal matters involving powers of attorney.