

## Spotlight on Chicagoland

# Special Search team steps up with service and expertise

The requests come in from all over Chicagoland: An engineering firm needs to establish property right-of-way before roadwork can begin; a surveyor wants a plat map in Will County; an attorney has to contact property owners near an address that's undergoing a zoning change.

No request is too arcane for the Special Search team. Or too urgent.

"We once got a call from a customer who was actually going into surgery," recalled Joe Wasilkus, a 30-year veteran of title re-



### Fast facts: Special Search

- Offered as an on-demand service; no subscription commitment is required
- Searches are customized to meet your specific criteria
- Property Insight plant and image repository resources are used to fulfill Special Search orders
- Orders for any and all Suburban Counties can be requested and fulfilled with a single phone call
- Most orders are fulfilled in three to five days; expedited service is available upon request and may incur rush order fees
- Orders are fulfilled locally by experienced professionals; searchers are available for phone consultation
- Searches may include computerized and paper-based plants
- Special Search customers are invoiced one time each month for products and/or services ordered and fulfilled the previous month. Invoices contain a detailed description of each order.

search working from Property Insight's downtown Chicago office. "He was on the gurney and they were taking him into the operating room, and he called in and said his search needed to be completed by the time he was out of surgery."

The procedure went well, and his order was waiting for him when he was wheeled into recovery.

"Customers are often in a hurry," he added. "That they need it yesterday is standard operating procedure for us."

Property Insight is well known as a provider of automated title plants in eight Chicagoland counties. Its Cook County plant is recognized as the official public record, with transactions dating back to 1840.

"Our founders buried paper records in the ground to preserve them in the middle of the Great Chicago Fire," said Mike Carsella, Midwest Regional Vice President. "That's a commitment we're proud to uphold."

Less known, perhaps, is its Special Search team, which each day scours electronic and paper-based files to meet customer demand for information to file a lien, confirm property ownership or create a chain of title.

Jeanne Makas and John Barnard work in Property Insight's Carol



# Special Search team answers the call

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Stream office, processing requests for the Collar Counties. Jeanne has 13 years of experience in title searching; John has 25.

“Mostly we do tract searches for the most current mortgage and liens, but we also work with customers who may not know what information they need to solve a particular problem,” said Jeanne. “So we talk it through with them and recommend a solution.”

Most requests come from attorneys. One special search, according to Joe, is a Zoning Variance Notification list, where a customer provides a property address and Special Search provides ownership information within a specific radius around the subject property.

“The customer uses that information to notify owners that zoning is changing for a particular property,” he explained.

A growing number of orders come from investors seeking to purchase tax liens and foreclosed property. These requests are fulfilled using custom extracts from the plant, filtered using the client’s specifications for geography, lien type and filing date.

For large commercial searches, the team defers to Norb.

“Norb” is Norb Tyrus, the dean of title searching in the Midwest. He has 40 years of experience and he works in the downtown office handling “99% of the commercial orders.” He has a well-deserved reputation for expertise in commercial property searching.

“Title companies will often refer their clients to him by name,” said Joe Wasilkus.

The accessibility to electronic data combined with title search expertise means that orders are handled quickly. A simple residential search can take as little as 24 hours. Customers usually expect and receive three- to five-day fulfillment—unless it’s a complex order.

“When we receive a rush order, we do everything we can to accommodate the client,” said Joe. “Many of our customers know and appreciate this.”

“Once I got a call from a law firm whose client was in jail,” recalled Norb. “They needed a search done in order to get him out.” So, Norb and his team went to work, not wanting someone to spend any more time in jail than was necessary.

The Special Search professionals are quick to set aside personal accomplishments in favor of promoting their team culture.

“Sometimes large property searches require more than one searcher, so we break it up into parts and work as a team,” explained John Barnard. “For us, when we’ve satisfied a customer — especially after a

large job — it just feels good.”

Why do customers seek out Property Insight for special searches?

“We have the most experienced staff in both Chicago and the suburbs,” explained John. “Our team knows the areas better than anyone... they know the warning signs... the pitfalls. They can anticipate if there are going to be problems or difficulties with a search,” he added.

Jeanne offered this perspective: “I think another advantage we may have is that we handle seven counties from our Carol Stream office. This gives a client a single point of contact for multiple counties. They can make one call instead of seven.”

Making things easy for customers is what makes these searches special.

## What can Special Search do for you?

- Perform residential tract and ownership searches.
- Conduct searches for tax liens and judgments.
- Perform searches that produce names and addresses of property owners to alert them of nearby zoning changes.
- Fulfill requests for copies of documents and plat maps.
- Provide a comprehensive property history report, which is generated from both automated and manual title plants.

## Who to call

### In Cook County:

Special Search Order Desk

Phone: 312.223.2582

FAX: 312.223.3428

### In Suburban Counties:

Special Search Order Desk

Phone: 630.510.4158

FAX: 630.588.0536

### National Sales:

Phone: 877.747.2537

E-mail: [DataAnalyticsInfo@BKFS.com](mailto:DataAnalyticsInfo@BKFS.com)