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### (S.D.)-Pennington County Cracks Down On Farmland Classification



By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 05/22/2013 10:32 AM

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) - Officials in a western South Dakota county have made it tougher for property owners to classify their land as farmland amid concerns that some are exploiting the label to save money in taxes.

Pennington County commissioners voted Tuesday to set higher standards. The change will potentially raise the taxes of 466 property owners and earn the county \$1.6 million more in revenue.

County Director of Equalization Shannon Rittberger says that non-farmers are abusing the system. Some have falsely claimed their million-dollar summer homes in the Black Hills were working farms, slashing their tax bills in half.

Property owners still must meet two of three requirements to get the farmland label. One now calls for the landowner have at least 160 acres instead of 40 acres.

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