

# State of Wisconsin \ Elections Board

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**DATE:** November 6, 2006

**TO:** All Municipal and County Clerks

**FROM:** State Elections Board Staff

**SUBJECT:** Post-Election Audit of Selected Reporting Units

Following the November general election the State Elections Board is required to direct an audit of each voting system used in the state to determine the error rate of the system in counting ballots that are validly cast by electors. In August, the State Elections Board approved recommended audit procedures for the 2006 November general election. This memorandum provides information about the selection and conduct of the audit following the November 7<sup>th</sup> general election.

## **Selection process**

At 10:00 am on Wednesday, November 8, 2006, the State Elections Board staff will conduct a random selection of reporting units that will be audited. A minimum of 50 reporting units will be selected for audit by municipal clerks. An additional 10 reporting units will be selected by the State Elections Board staff. These audits will be conducted by the SEB staff.

For each reporting unit selected, the municipal and county clerk will be notified by the SEB staff on Wednesday, November 8, 2006. A list of all selected reporting units will also be posted on the SEB website by the close of business on Wednesday, November 8, 2006 by the SEB staff.

## **Time Period for Audit**

The audit must be conducted no later than two (2) weeks after the county board of canvassers certifies the election results to the State Elections Board. The county board of canvassers may conduct the audit as part of its canvass proceedings.

The audit is open to the public. Members of the public may not interfere with the conduct of the audit. The time and location of the audit must be posted at least 48 hours before the audit.

## **Materials Subject to Audit**

Upon notification by the State Elections Board that the municipality shall conduct an audit (or that SEB staff will be conducting an audit) of a selected reporting unit, the municipal clerk shall make arrangements with the county clerk and the county board of canvassers to either preserve and retain the materials (including voter lists, the inspectors statement, tally sheets, reports printed or generated by the voting system, ballots and any other required materials) that will be used during the audit or to identify materials so that the county clerk may set the

materials aside to allow for auditing. All materials subject to audit, however, must be retained in a secure location by either the municipal or county clerk.

### **Audit procedure**

Upon agreement of the municipality and county, the county clerk or county board of canvassers may perform the audit of the selected reporting unit(s) in lieu of a municipal-conducted audit.

The municipal clerk shall review the tally sheets and voter lists for each selected reporting unit to note any discrepancies between the number of voters and the number of votes cast in each contest. Each clerk in a selected reporting unit shall audit each voting system and each type of machine used in that reporting unit.

1. On the day after the election (Wednesday), the State Elections Board selects and notifies the municipalities that will conduct an audit.
2. The municipality shall confirm to SEB the reporting unit, polling place(s) and voting devices that were selected for audit.
3. If the reporting unit uses multiple voting devices, the clerk shall audit each voting device used in the reporting unit.
4. A minimum of four (4) contests shall be audited, including the top candidate race on the ballot (either gubernatorial or presidential). The other audited contests shall be selected randomly by the State Elections Board from all other contests that appear on the ballot, but must appear on every ballot in the state.
5. The municipal clerk shall inform the State Elections Board and publicly post notice of the time and location for the voting system audit at least 48 hours before the scheduled audit.
6. The attached Audit Recording Form shall be used and completed as part of the audit. A copy of the Audit Recording Form shall be provided to the State Elections Board.
7. A minimum of three individuals shall participate in the audit, including one individual to coordinate and supervise the process. Votes shall be tallied/hand counted for the contests identified for inclusion in the audit. For some voting systems, this will require counting the votes listed on the paper roll generated by the voting system on Election Day. At least two individuals shall make an independent count. These audit hand-counts are compared to each other and to the Election Day vote tallies/totals, which will typically include both hand-counted (from write-in votes) and machine generated tallies.
  - a. If the hand counts differ from each other, the paper records/ballots must be recounted.
  - b. If the hand counts match, the results are compared to the Election Day vote tallies/totals.

- c. If the hand counts and Election Day vote tallies/totals match, this is listed on the appropriate form and clerk commences audit of the next contest.
  - d. If the hand counts and Election Day vote tallies/totals do not match, the clerk double checks the Election Day vote tallies/totals and counts the ballots again. If the counts do not match after this recount, the difference is noted on the appropriate form.
- 8. The audit shall record the number of votes cast in the audited contest, the number of undervotes in the audited contest, the number of overvotes in the audited contest, and the number of spoiled, blank and cancelled ballots in the audited contest.
  - 9. The county board of canvassers may be involved in comparing the tallies.
  - 10. Each municipality conducting an audit must submit the designated reporting form(s) and supporting documents from the audit, including tally sheets, to the State Elections Board to indicate whether the audit was completed and whether any discrepancies were found.

### **Reimbursement**

The State Elections Board will reimburse municipalities up to \$300 for the costs associated with conducting the audit. Appropriate documentation will be required. Municipalities will be reimbursed (up to \$300) for actual costs incurred. The State Elections Board will not reimburse personnel costs at a rate exceeding \$10 per hour.

Upon agreement of the municipality and county, the county clerk or county board of canvassers may perform the audit of the selected reporting unit(s) in lieu of a municipal-conducted audit. In this instance, the county would be entitled to any reimbursement provided by the State Elections Board.

### **Required Audit Distinguished from Required Testing**

The pre-election test of electronic voting system (section 5.84, Wis. Stats.) uses a pre-determined set of ballots to ensure that the voting system is properly programmed prior to Election Day. The post-election audit (section 7.08(6), Wis. Stats.), on the other hand, is designed to assess how the electronic voting system performed on Election Day using the actual votes cast by electors.

As required by Section 7.08(6), Wis. Stats, the audit will only be conducted following each November general election. An audit of electronic voting systems is not required after other elections.

### **Additional Information**

If you need additional information please contact Ross Hein at 608-267-3666.

## Audit Recording Form

MUNICIPALITY:	_____
COUNTY:	_____
HINDI #:	_____
CONTACT PERSON & PHONE:	_____
DATE of AUDIT:	_____
VOTING SYSTEM DESCRIPTION (VENDOR, MODEL NAME/NUMBER):	_____
VOTING DEVICE SERIAL NUMBER:	_____
MEMORY CARD SERIAL NUMBER:	_____
SOFTWARE VERSION NUMBER:	_____
FIRMWARE VERSION NUMBER:	_____
PERSONS CONDUCTING AUDIT:	_____
DATE OF ELECTION:	_____
ELECTION CONTESTS AUDITED:	_____
TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTERS:	_____
NUMBER OF VOTES IN CONTEST:	_____
UNDERVOTES IN CONTEST:	_____
OVERVOTES IN CONTEST:	_____
BLANK VOTES IN CONTEST:	_____
CANCELLED BALLOTS IN CONTEST:	_____
SPOILED BALLOTS IN CONTEST:	_____

*ATTACH COPIES OF MACHINE AND MANUAL TALLY SHEETS*

**Audit Recording Form**  
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LIST HAND-COUNT TALLY AND ERROR RATE (%) FOR EACH CONTEST AUDITED:

To calculate the error rate:

Note any differences between hand-count audit tally and machine-generated (Election Day) tally.  
Divide the total number of differences between the hand-count audit tally and machine-generated (Election Day) tally by the total number of votes cast for that contest.  
Multiply this number by 100. This is your percentage (%) error rate.

LIST AND DESCRIBE ANY DISCREPANCIES FOR EACH AUDITED CONTEST: