

Wisconsin Elections Commission: Erroneous mailings to state residents

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MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Elections Commission on Thursday cautioned Wisconsin voters to carefully scrutinize any mailings coming from organizations other than WEC or local clerks that urge residents to register to vote or to request an absentee ballot.

One recent mailer, in particular, is causing confusion because in some cases the letters are being sent to voters who are already registered or who have already requested an absentee ballot. The mailer, which contains other inaccuracies, comes from “Election Mail Service,” which lists as its address a Post Office box in Austin, Texas.

One of the problems with the mailer is that it instructs voters to return voter registration forms to the WEC, which does not have a role in that process. Local clerks are the authorized entity to process voter registrations. The WEC and local election officials are getting calls from registered voters who have already requested their absentee ballots, and who say they thought the mailer meant they had done something wrong and needed to make another request.

Agency officials said Wisconsin residents can check their voter registration and absentee ballot status through the WEC and should not depend on third party mailers for any voter information.

“For any questions about registration status or absentee voting, Wisconsin residents should visit myvote.wi.gov,” said WEC Administrator Meagan Wolfe. “All sorts of groups send all sorts of mailings that appear to be official but in reality, they are not. Local clerks and the WEC’s myvote.wi.gov website are the best places to obtain needed voter information.”

Political and independent groups may legally send out voter registration forms and absentee ballot request forms to encourage voting, Wolfe said. However, the Commission's advice to voters is to examine these mailers carefully before relying on them, especially the instructions on where to send registration forms or applications.

Voters who wish to vote absentee and have not yet made a request for an absentee ballot are encouraged to do so as soon as possible. While the legal deadline for most voters to request an absentee ballot for the Aug. 9 primary election is Thursday, Aug. 4, waiting until then could result in not getting a ballot in time to vote because of turnaround time for the Postal Service. USPS recommends mailing your absentee ballot at least one week ahead of the August 9 election for it to arrive at the clerk's office in time.