

Wisconsin Elections Commission: Public testing of Wisconsin voting equipment can begin Oct. 29

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The Wisconsin Elections Commission today is reminding media members that the window for public testing of electronic voting equipment for the Nov. 8 General Election starts on Saturday, Oct. 29. Testing must occur prior to Election Day.

The test provides an opportunity in communities across Wisconsin for the public, between Oct. 29 and Nov. 7, to witness how election officials are preparing for the upcoming election.

“There are numerous checks performed on voting equipment used in Wisconsin, which is why we’re confident that voting equipment is an accurate, secure, and efficient way to count votes,” said WEC Administrator Meagan Wolfe. “Between now and Election Day, voters in each and every community across Wisconsin can witness these security protocols firsthand.”

By law, all municipalities are required to conduct a public test of their electronic voting equipment not earlier than 10 days before each election. Pre-election testing is intended to confirm the accuracy of voting equipment programming and to bring transparency to the process. This event is considered a public meeting and must be noticed at least 48 hours prior. The public is invited to attend and observe the testing process. Voters can check their local notice to see when the public test is scheduled for their municipality.

Programming is verified by feeding a set of pre-marked ballots into each machine and reviewing the results tape that is generated. An errorless count is required at the conclusion of the testing. According to Wis. Stat. 5.84(1), any anomalies

identified in testing must be remedied before the equipment can be used in an election.

Following the public test, the voting equipment and memory devices are required to be secured. The Commission tells local clerks to keep memory devices in the equipment with a tamper-evident seal and to maintain a chain-of-custody log that documents any access to each memory device or tabulator by a member of the clerk's office.

Media members are encouraged to contact local clerks to determine the testing plans and schedule for their communities.