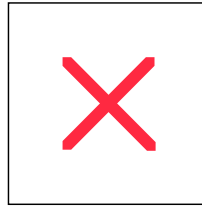


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## **ELECTION UPDATE NOVEMBER 9, 2007**

During this General Election period the number of ballots mailed or deposited at the Auditor's Office by Monday, November 5<sup>th</sup> was 25,647. This week we received another 29,781 ballots. Ballots received prior to the election are processed and ready to tabulate on Election Day. All ballots must go through an extensive process prior to counting so all ballots received on the day prior to the election, Election Day and the following days are being processed this week. This year was an exceptional year because so many voters waited until very close to Election Day to vote their ballot.

I have a dedicated staff that has worked into the evenings. They will also be working this Saturday preparing the ballots for counting and counting the ballots so that candidates and other interested voters will know the unofficial results as soon as possible. Speed of results is important but accuracy is the first and most important priority.

I have been asked the question of why does it take so long to count ballots.  
The following is the process that every ballot goes through prior to being counted.

A count is made of every ballot envelope received in the Auditor's Office. The signature on every ballot envelope is compared with the signature on that voter's registration file. The outside purple envelope is opened and the inside white secrecy envelope is removed. A separate team removes the ballot from the white secrecy envelope. Every ballot is inspected for tears and other stray marks that would prevent the ballot from being counted by the ballot counting system. Ballots with tears or stray marks are duplicated by a team that makes an exact copy of that voter's ballot so it will be counted by the vote counting equipment as the voter intended. After the completed inspection process, the ballots are counted by the ballot counting equipment and the results posted. All ballots are in secure storage except when they are being processed by staff. It is not a matter of a ballot being counted the same day it is received.

The name of the candidate elected, in a close race, may not be known until every valid ballot is counted on November 27 and the election certified.