

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) About Electronic Voting Machines

- *Do these machines really have problems in Pennsylvania?*

Yes. Because of a faulty Direct Record Electronic (DRE) voting system, over 10,000 votes were missing in just three counties alone (Mercer, Beaver, and Greene) in the presidential race in 2004. The results of the entire primary election were missing from DREs in Berks County in 2005. And in 2006 every single machine in Westmoreland County was programmed with the wrong date and time of the election.

- *I hear a lot about a voter-verified paper ballot. What's that?*

A voter-verified paper ballot is a piece of paper that will either be marked by the voter with a pencil or an accessible ballot marker, and will allow the voter to check that his or her votes are being recorded correctly as intended. This paper will be scanned for counting and deposited into a secure locked ballot box before the voter leaves the polling place, and will be available for recounting or auditing the votes. In case of machine failure the paper will be there to reveal the true will of the voters.

- *What do you mean, machine failure?*

The federal Election Assistance Commission's Voting Systems Guidelines allow a mean time between failure for electronic voting machines of only 163 hours, which means as much as 9.2% of these machines may fail while they are up and running on any election day.

- *But aren't these machines tested?*

Yes and no. So-called "federal" testing of voting machines is done by private laboratories, and until very recently there was not much oversight by the US Government. Voting machine companies paid labs to run the tests and were allowed to keep all test results and specifics secret. At the state level, our Pennsylvania examination only test-votes 12 ballots, and checks only 17 very simple points. Security, ongoing reliability, and accessibility for people with disabilities are barely tested at all.

- *My goodness, this is scary! What can I do to protect my vote?*

Join with VotePA and other organizations and citizens who are calling for voter-verified paper ballots on all voting machines routine and audits of all elections. Help us work for better laws and wise purchases of voting equipment. Visit us online today and learn more.

www.VotePA.us pennsylvaniavoter@comcast.net

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