

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) About Electronic Voting Machines

- ***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 will be printed out by a voting machine, and will allow the voter to check that his or her votes are being recorded correctly as intended. This paper will be deposited into a secure locked ballot box before the voter leaves the polling place, and will be available for counting, recounting, or auditing the votes. In case of machine failure the paper will be there to reveal the true will of the voters.

- ***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. In our our own Centre County, we have had reports of vote flipping on the screen and machines malfunctions.

- ***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. The voting machine companies still pay for their own tests, and they own all the results. They are allowed to keep all test 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 Concerned Voters, VotePA and other organizations that are working for voter-verified paper ballots on all voting machines and routine audits of all elections. Help us work for better laws and wise purchases of voting equipment. Visit us online today and learn more.