

EXHIBIT 19

Voter registration forms scrutinized

Election workers find thousands of errors on records

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Darin McGregor / The Rocky

Ray Archuleta sorts and time-stamps various voter-registration and change-of-address forms Monday that were mailed into the Denver Elections Division.

Maria Vargas sits in a cubicle in a second-floor corner of the Denver Elections office, surrounded by piles of voter registration forms marked with yellow Post-it notes.

"Bad address," one Post-it says.

"Wrong SSN."

"Missing signature."

Vargas tries to figure out whether the people who filled out the faulty forms are eligible to vote. She oversees a team of workers who investigate a host of problems in up to 10 percent of all forms - thousands of them - submitted to the office.

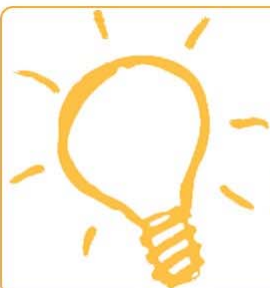
As of Monday night, almost 21,000 voter records statewide out of more than 3.1 million required some kind of fix, according to a count by the secretary of state's office. Many records are missing driver's license or Social Security numbers, the secretary of state reported Wednesday.

County election offices have been deluged with voter registration forms and mail ballot requests since the August primary. And thousands of forms were dropped off or mailed on the Monday registration deadline, so more faulty paperwork is inevitable. On Monday alone, the Denver elections office received more than 8,000 forms for new registrations, updates and mail ballot requests.

Vargas is among scores of election workers trying to resolve problems by writing or calling the voter. They must finalize the voter rolls before Oct. 20, the start of early voting.

If voters can't be reached or don't respond, their file will remain in "incomplete" status, which means they may cast only a provisional ballot on Election Day. Provisional ballots are tallied during the two-week period after Election Day and require additional ID to be accepted.

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The checking process is different this year because of the state's new voter registration database. The \$13 million system, known as SCORE (State of Colorado Registration and Election), was rolled out statewide this summer by the secretary of state's office to comply with a 2002 federal law.

In the past, counties had separate databases and checked voter information against motor vehicle records. Then, the state would do another inspection against prison and health records to see if a voter had died or was behind bars for a felony.

Now, local officials use SCORE, which automatically checks a person's information against state agency databases. That means SCORE is more up-to-date and will do a better job of finding problems and keeping "clean" records, officials say.

But the new database isn't perfect.

Magellan Data and Mapping Strategies in Louisville is a consulting firm that buys voter information from the secretary of state and compiles specialized lists for mostly Republican campaigns.

"The data is only as good as the man or woman that's inputting the data," said Magellan's Matt Coudayre. "We'll see information that's in the wrong fields. They skip something, or the voter didn't give the information."

Magellan "scrubs" the lists using other databases

and software, including one that checks addresses. It has found almost 70,000 voters with undeliverable addresses. And almost 23,000 of those addresses are for voters who have requested a mail ballot.

That means those 23,000 voters won't get their ballot this month, Coudayre said, unless election officials can find them to update their addresses.

But faulty records won't bounce a voter off the rolls. Some blogs claim the secretary of state's office is purging voters - one rumor says most are Democrats. But officials insist that isn't happening.

Alton Dillard, spokesman for Denver elections, said its voter list is "flabby" because officials are careful not to purge voters and, in fact, haven't done that for years.

Richard Coolidge, spokesman for the secretary of state, said election workers don't remove voters from the database.

Al Kolwicz, a Boulder software engineer and voting activist, criticizes the statewide database, saying it does not ferret out problem data.

For instance, dozens of voters are listed as being born after the date of their application to vote, he said.

"I wouldn't have any reason to believe that it (SCORE) is any better," Kolwicz said.

Secretary of State Mike Coffman defends SCORE.

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He says the system's "cutting-edge technology has expanded the state's ability to maintain clean and accurate voter rolls."

Meanwhile, county election workers are pouring through a mountain of paperwork. In Denver every day, Vargas compiles lists of addresses so letters can be sent asking voters to fix their records.

Vargas said about half of the forms stay incomplete. Yet, this year more people than in the past are taking the time to correct their registrations.

"It's probably because it's a general election," she said. "Everybody wants to vote."

Error alert

Incomplete voter registration forms received by county clerks as of Monday

- * Adams 1,915
- * Arapahoe 3,815
- * Boulder 1,847
- * Denver 2,140
- * Douglas 2,127
- * El Paso 3,789
- * Jefferson 1,513

* Larimer 979

* Pueblo 403

* Weld 1,164

* STATEWIDE 20,975

Incomplete voter registration forms include those that

- * Are missing driver's license or ID numbers.
- * Have information that doesn't match state records.
- * Have bad addresses.

If the voter doesn't fix the problem before the election, he or she must cast a provisional ballot on Election Day.

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