

0 Connecticut Citizen Election Audit

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Watchdog Group: 24 Audits Since 2007 with Little Improvement

Independent Observation and Analysis of Connecticut's Nov 2022 Post-Election Audit

HARTFORD: We conclude, based on citizen observations and analysis of official municipal post-election vote audit of the November 2022 election, that it failed to meet basic audit standards

After 16 years with disappointing, locally performed, hand-count audits, we recommend replacement of all local hand-count audits with sufficient and efficient electronically assisted manual audits utilizing the UConn Audit Station.

The non-partisan Connecticut Citizen Election Audit has provided volunteer observation and post-election audit reports since the adoption of optical scanners statewide in 2007. Without the hours and mileage incurred by these volunteers after every election nobody but a few election officials would know the actual quality of the audits performed, while officials would have less motivation toward credible audits.

- ▼ The audits were not conducted and reported as required by law. The Secretary of the State's Office continues to fail to take responsibility for that failure by local officials.
- ▼ Human error was still considered an acceptable explanation of differences between machine and manual counts. This defeats the purpose of the audits.
- ▼ Weaknesses in ballot chain-of-custody and security procedures necessary for confidence that ballots were not tampered with between the election and the municipal audit counting sessions.
- ▼ The short schedule for audits and dates for electronic audits not announced sufficiently in advance cause both registrars and the Citizen Audit to scramble to conduct and observe audits – they should be added to the annual election calendar months in advance.
- ▼ There were at least three municipalities with new registrars, neither of which had previously performed audits. This resulted in various failures to follow procedures and in one case failure to allow transparency required by the procedures.

The public, candidates, and the Secretary of the State should expect local election officials to be able to organize audits and produce accurate, complete audit reports. The public should expect the Secretary of the State's Office to take the lead in ensuring that the audit is scheduled in advance, complete, and publicly verifiable.

We are pleased with the following developments:

- ▲ Electronic audits again included random manual verification comparing some paper ballots to Cast Vote Records produced by the audit station.
- ▲ There was a significant reduction in incomplete forms.

We emphasize that this report does not question any election official's integrity.

All reports and backup data are available online at: <https://www.CTElectionAudit.org>.

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