



Town of Florence, Wisconsin

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Did You Know. . . Florence Facts

When Election Day is Over (shared 05-07-26)

Did you ever wonder happens when the polls close and Election Day is over? That is actually two questions in one. First let's look at what happens when the polls close for the day. When it hits 8:00 p.m. on Election Night, the polls close with an official ringing of the bell.

Did you know that if you are in line to vote when it is 8:00 p.m. you are still permitted to vote? One of the election workers is designated as an "end of line officer" who stands at the end of the line at 8:00 p.m. Anyone in line ahead of that election worker is allowed to cast a ballot because they were already in line and waiting to vote at 8:00 p.m.

Did you know that the number of voters issued a voting number and the number of ballots should be the same? This number is checked periodically throughout the day as well. Election workers are able to tell the number of voters that have been given a number, and then workers can verify the number of ballots that were issued by looking at the counter on the tabulator. **Did you know that this number may appear to be different during the day, but it is because of the absentee ballots?** Absentee ballots are issued a voter number, but those ballots are processed as time allows, so when there are a lot of in-person people voting at the polls, it can take quite a while to be able to process all of the absentee ballots. Once all of the absentees are processed and fed into the tabulator, the number on the tabulator should match the last voter number give.

Did you know two identical copies of the poll list are kept for each election? You only sign one copy, but that is the only difference between the two lists. **Did you know these lists are compared to verify they match?** Depending on how busy it is with in-person voters, the election workers will try to compare lists during the day, but they always compare them at the end of the night. Two workers go through the books page by page to compare the numbers assigned to the voters on each page.

Did you know that the tabulator counts the ballots? It has a scanner that reads the ballot each time a voter inserts a ballot and pushes the "cast" button on the screen. It stores a scanned picture of the ballot on memory cards and drops the paper ballot into the ballot bin. If the voter filled in a circle and wrote-in a name, then the tabulator will divert that ballot into a separate bin where there are other write-ins as well. At the end of the night after all of the ballots are fed into the tabulator, and it prints a report to show each race and candidate and how many votes they received.

Did you know that the Town of Florence did voluntary hand counts of the ballots the first year this tabulator was used to verify it was counting them correctly? After each Election in 2022, election workers hand counted and tallied ballots. Each hand count matched the report from the tabulator. In addition, if there is a race that is at all close, election workers will still hand count and verify that the tabulator counted the ballots correctly.

Did you know that the ballots are sealed in ballot bags? At the end of the night, all of the ballots are enclosed into clear ballot bags that are then sealed. There is a certification on the ballot bag that is signed by the Chief Inspector and by an election worker from the Republican Party and Democratic Party. The sealed ballot bags are then taken to the Town Office until they are brought to the County Clerk the day after the election.

Did you know that there are many other items that also go to the County Clerk after the election? The copy of the poll book that the voters sign goes to the County Clerk. In



addition, the County Clerk gets the absentee ballot log, all of the used absentee ballot certificate envelopes, the media cards that contain the scanned images of the ballots, any rejected absentee envelopes (rejected because they did not have complete certificates), the chief inspector's statement, and copies of the results tape. All of this is required to be to the County Clerk the day after the election.

Did you know that's not how the County gets the results from the Election? If the County had to wait until all the Towns physically brought in the result to the Clerk's Office, there would not be results to report on Election Night. While the County does get two copies of the results tape, the results get called into the County on Election Night. There is no modem used to share the results. They are not sent electronically. Once the results are verified at the polling place, the Town Clerk calls the County Clerk's Office and reads the results tape line by line to share with the County Clerk how many people voted, the candidate names, and the number of votes they each received. The County Clerk compiles the list and posts it on the County website.

Did you know that the results reported on Election Night are considered "unofficial" results? The municipal board of canvass typically meets on Election Night to verify the results of the election. The County also does a canvass to verify results, but that canvass is typically not done until the Monday or Tuesday following the election. At this point, election results are still not considered final until all of the canvass results from around the state are verified and reported to the state.

The Town of Florence is proud to have open, transparent government. It means that people can clearly see what the Town is doing, why it is doing it, and how decisions are made. Open and transparent means that information is not hidden, decisions are made at meetings open to the public, and questions and answers can be shared from the Board with the community. The ultimate goal is that people can see and understand the decisions that are made, how to ask questions, and share information

One way the Town of Florence is looking to accomplish this is by sharing informational facts about the Town and the Town's government. Through sharing facts, the Town is looking to help increase awareness and understanding of local Government.