



From Blaze to Praise

STAN STANART

Harris County Clerk & Chief Elections Official

The November 2010 Election

HARRIS COUNTY TEXAS



Harris County Texas

Third largest county in the nation.

Ten Most Populous Counties: 2000 to 2010

www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/doc/pdf/94-171.pdf

County	Population	
	2000	2010
MOST POPULOUS		
Los Angeles, CA	9,519,338	9,818,605
Cook, IL	5,376,741	5,194,675
Harris, TX	3,400,578	4,092,459
Maricopa, AZ	3,072,149	3,817,117
San Diego, CA	2,813,833	3,095,313
Orange, CA	2,846,289	3,010,232
Kings, NY	2,465,326	2,504,700
Miami-Dade, FL	2,253,362	2,496,435
Dallas, TX	2,218,899	2,368,139
Queens, NY	2,229,379	2,230,722

¹ Among counties with Census 2000 populations of 10,000 or more.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census and Census 2000.

**Harris county's population of 4,092,459 is
larger than 24 states in the USA.**



Harris County, Texas Election Technology Center



**Houses the election machines and equipment
to conduct elections..**

August 27th, 2010

67 days before the

November 2, 2010

Election



The Blaze

As a result, the conduct of the Nov. 2010 election in Harris County was placed in doubt.

The New York Times

Politics

WORLD U.S. N.Y. / REGION BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY SCIENCE HEALTH SPORTS OPINION

Houston Scrambles After Blaze That Destroyed Voting Machines



Brett Coomer/Houston Chronicle, Via Associated Press

Houston firefighters poured water on the smoldering shell of a warehouse that caught fire around 4 a.m. on Aug. 27.

THE PROMPT RESPONSE



As the fire raged, the County Clerk assured the public that there was nothing to worry about, stating that “County’s leaders would pull together” to overcome the catastrophe.

Election officials stay optimistic, even after fire destroys Harris Co. voting equipment



County clerk's office plans for election despite fire

Friday, August 27, 2010



Before the end of the catastrophic day, via the broadcast media, the elections office made sure that the public knew that Harris County would “have a timely election.”

Harris County assures voting will be smooth after fire destroys machines



Other top
County officials
echoed the
County Clerk's
sentiments.

CAMPAIGN '10

JUDGE ED EMMETT
HARRIS COUNTY

6:00 91°

11 NEWS



HARRIS COUNTY VOWS ELECTION INTEGRITY IN POST DISASTER ELECTION PLAN

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Harris County officials vow election integrity after fire



abc13

ABC-13

Harris County lost 10,000 voting machines in the election warehouse fire.

ap



Posted: Saturday, September 11, 2010 12:00 am | Updated:
12:16 am, Sun Nov 21, 2010.

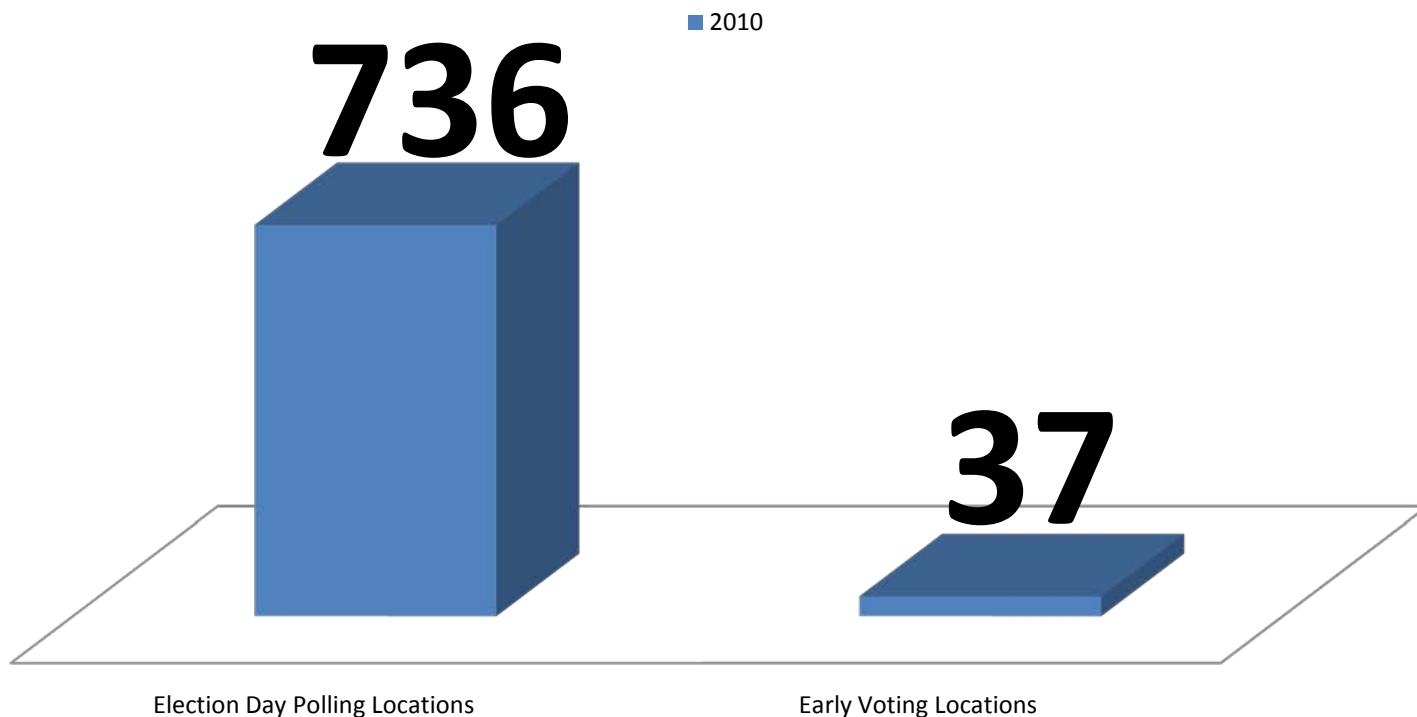
By ED EMMETT and BEVERLY KAUFMAN For The Citizen |
[0 comments](#)

It's generally accepted that the wheels of government turn slowly, but — as with all conventional wisdom — there are frequent exceptions to the rule.

On Aug. 30, just three days after a large fire destroyed the building that housed all 10,000 of Harris County's voting machines, Commissioners Court met in emergency session to approve a plan for the conduct of the Nov. 2 general election. That plan, devised by County Clerk Beverly Kaufman with input from her staff and other officials, had to be enacted quickly to be able to conduct the election in accordance with the election

The number of Pre-disaster Early Voting and Election Day polling locations would remain the same.

**Harris County Plan for Early Voting and Election Day Polling locations
before and after Disaster**



The election would comply with state and federal voting laws



Photograph of President Lyndon Johnson Signs the Voting Rights Act as Martin Luther King, Jr., with Other Civil Rights Leaders in the Capitol Rotunda, Washington, DC, 08/06/1965

**Including,
making sure
all voting sites
were HAVA
compliant.**





And, all voters would be provided fair and equal access to voting process.

ASSESSING THE LOSS



Harris County's inventory of election equipment totaled over 16,000 voting and support units.



08/23/2010



08/23/2010

**Including,
7,190
eSlate
electronic
voting
machines**



1,650 Disabled Access Units (DAU)



2,870 Judge Booth Controls (JBC)



360 PCs/Laptops, 220 printers, 120 card swipes readers, 50 modems



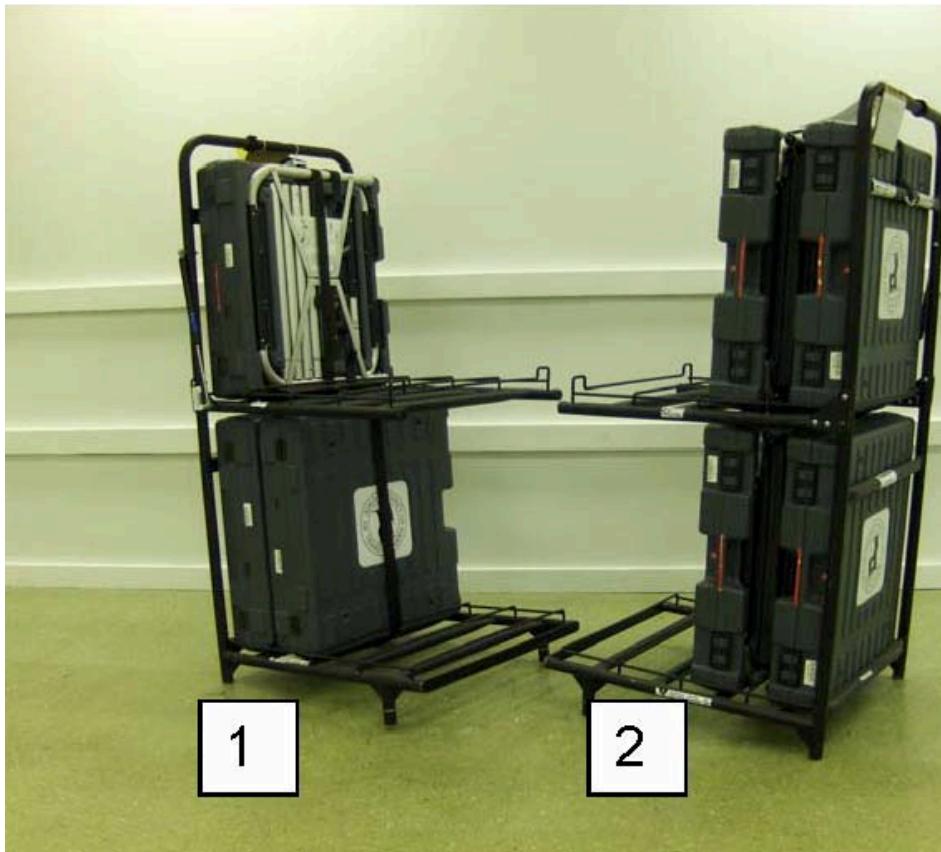
900 cell phones



150 hand scanners



80 delivery carts, pallet jacks, copiers and other tools used in the conduct of an election



The first place for key political news and analysis from the NBC News Political Unit

27
Aug
2010

4:58pm, EDT

**The fire destroyed
the county's
election center
and reduced its
inventory of
election
equipment to
virtually zero.**

All of Houston voting machines destroyed in fire



The estimated “*total loss was valued at about \$40 million.*”



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Warehouse blaze still a mystery

Officials still investigating cause of fire that destroyed voting devices

By PAIGE HEWITT

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

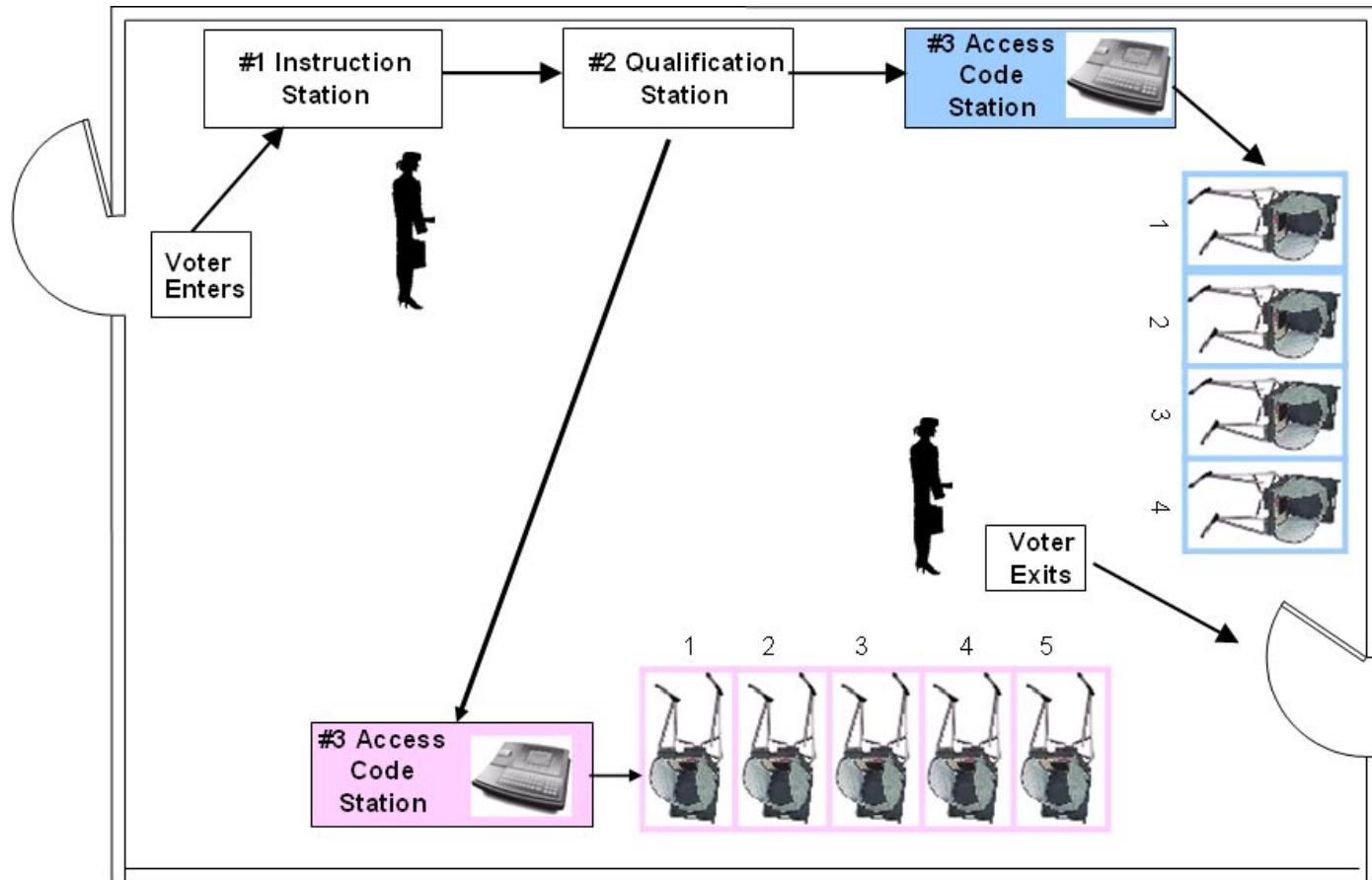
Aug. 29, 2010, 7:59AM

The total loss was valued at about \$40 million — \$30 million in voting equipment and \$10 million for the building, said Kaufman.

THE CHALLENGE



As chief elections officer of the county, the County Clerk faced the monumental challenge of rebuilding the County's voting infrastructure.





51 days before early
voting began





and 67 days before
Election Day



The catastrophe must be addressed before dealing with its consequences.



- ✓ Make sure key county staff is on-site to deal with the immediate consequences of the disaster
- ✓ Make sure important political leaders are personally informed about incident

Once the best course is determined recovery can begin.

- ✓ Department head must conduct prompt assessment of agency's capacity to function
- ✓ Set parameters for the post-disaster election
- ✓ Meet with election personnel to outline and designate tasks
- ✓ Meet with the election equipment vendor
- ✓ Prepare Needs Assessment Report
- ✓ Prepare and Review Post-Disaster Election Plan

After a disaster, the workload increases.

- ✓ Submit necessary Post-Disaster Reports to Commissioners Court
- ✓ Coordinate crucial activities of recovery team
- ✓ Find a Temporary Workspace
- ✓ Secure Borrowed Equipment
- ✓ Test and Prepare Equipment
- ✓ Additional Training
- ✓ Distribution of Election Supplies
- ✓ Election Night Activities

THE ELECTION PLAN



Three days after the fire, the County Clerk submitted an emergency election plan for the conduct of the Nov. 2 General Election.

Monday, August 30, 2010



The plan called for the continued use of the eSlate electronic voting system as the principal method of voting.



The header features the "community IMPACT NEWSPAPER" logo in white on a red background. Below it is the tagline "LOCAL. USEFUL. EVERYONE GETS IT.*". To the right, there's a dropdown menu for "Northwest Houston" with a checked checkbox icon, and links for "Login" and "Logout". A navigation bar below includes "Home", "News", "Features", "Health", "Coupons", "Local Jobs", "Print Edition", "Contact Us", and "Submit".

Harris County officials remain confident in voting systems despite destructive fire

By Molly Ryan

Wednesday, 08 September 2010

The plan also called for making paper ballots available to voters on Election Day.



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72 Comments

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Voters will be able to choose: Paper or eSlate

In wake of fire, Harris County plans hybrid balloting system on Nov. 2

By CHRIS MORAN
HOUSTON CHRONICLE
Sept. 4, 2010, 7:16AM

Voters will have the option of casting a paper ballot in the Nov. 2 general election

Most importantly, the plan called for the speedy acquisition, by loan or purchase, of the election equipment needed to conduct a timely election.



The Clerk's Plan was approved.



Harris County commissioners OK emergency voting machines plan after fire destroyed equipment

Monday, Aug 30, 2010, 05:26PM CST

1 comments

Add comment



By Lee Ann O'Neal



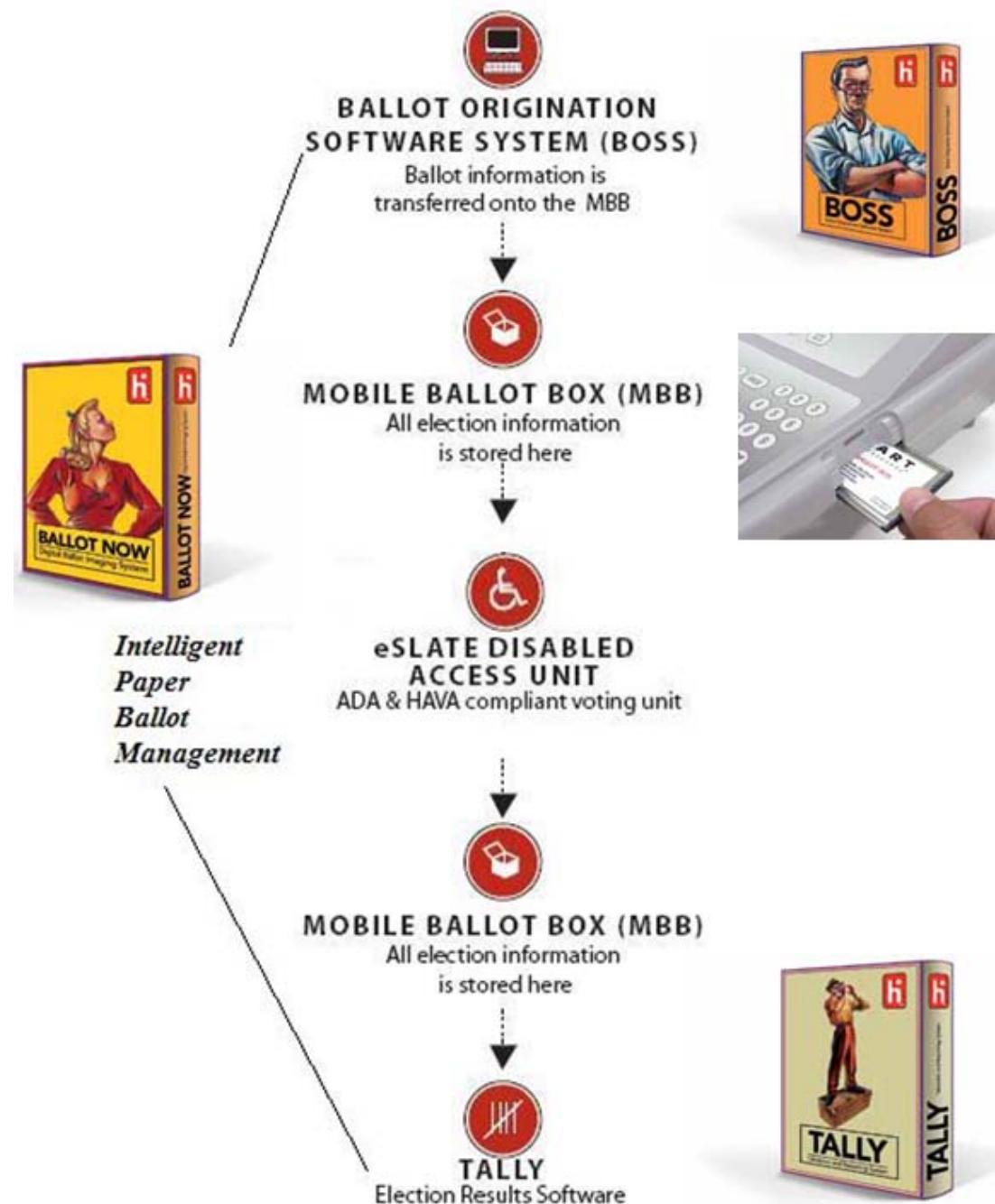
Harris County officials will purchase and borrow voting machines after the Commissioners Court approved a plan to do "any and all things necessary and convenient" to be prepared to hold the November election.

The commissioners unanimously approved the order this afternoon, lifting the usual competitive bidding requirements that would govern the purchase of machines and authorizing county officials to make deals with other local governments to borrow from their stock. The measure was amended to specify that the county would seek eSlate machines like those destroyed Friday in a fire.

WHY USE THE PRE-DISASTER VOTING EQUIPMENT?



The eSlate is compatible with the expensive Ballot Management Technology software that survived the fire and is used in the administration of Absentee Ballots and tabulating votes.



The eSlate voting system had been used in Houston since 2001 and Countywide since 2002.
It is familiar to voters.



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County introduces electronic machines

JOHN WILLIAMS, Houston Chronicle Political Writer Staff

SAT 10/20/2001 Houston Chronicle, Section A, Page 31 Metfront, 3 STAR Edition

Insurance covered the costs of replacing the voting equipment.



No time to certify a different method of voting.



Candidates' supported the plan



HOME NEWS SPORTS BUSINESS ENTERTAINMENT LIFE TRAVEL BLOGS JOBS HOMES CA



Houston Politics

Blogging City Hall and Harris County government with the Chronicle staff

Candidate on buying new voting machines

Republican candidate [Stan Stanart](#) said he has no objection to Kaufman buying new machines on her way out the door.

"Ours are proven, the current ones from [Hart \(InterCivic\)](#). People in Harris County are comfortable on those. They know how they work," Stanart said. There is a big learning curve in getting voters accustomed to a new set of machines, Stanart said, so he supports replacing the voting machines with the same brand.

More importantly, the use of the eSlate and paper ballot system used in absentee voting averted any legal issues which the county may have had to face by introducing unfamiliar voting equipment.



KEYS TO POST DISASTER ELECTION PLAN



Anticipate equipment need

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Harris County bracing for higher-than-usual voter turnout

VOTE ON PROPS

Good streets. Good drainage.

Borrow voting equipment



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Alternative voting options considered in wake of fire

by khou.com staff

khou.com

Posted on August 27, 2010 at 11:51 PM

Updated Friday, Aug 27 at 11:55 PM

HOUSTON -- After a devastating fire, the race is on to figure out how Harris County will run an election that's two months away.

Hopefully the election equipment vendor has the capacity to manufacture lots of voting machines



Encourage Absentee and Early Voting



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HARRIS COUNTY CLERK TO VOTERS: VOTE EARLY!

BY NAACPHOU, ON SEPTEMBER 12TH, 2010

From Harris County Clerk's Office: "on Friday, August 27, 2010, we experienced a devastating loss of our eSlate election equipment in a fire that destroyed our warehouse... We strongly encourage voters to cast their ballot during the Early Voting period beginning Monday, October 18 and ending Friday, October 29 or thru ballot by mail..." Source: <http://www.harrisvotes.com/>

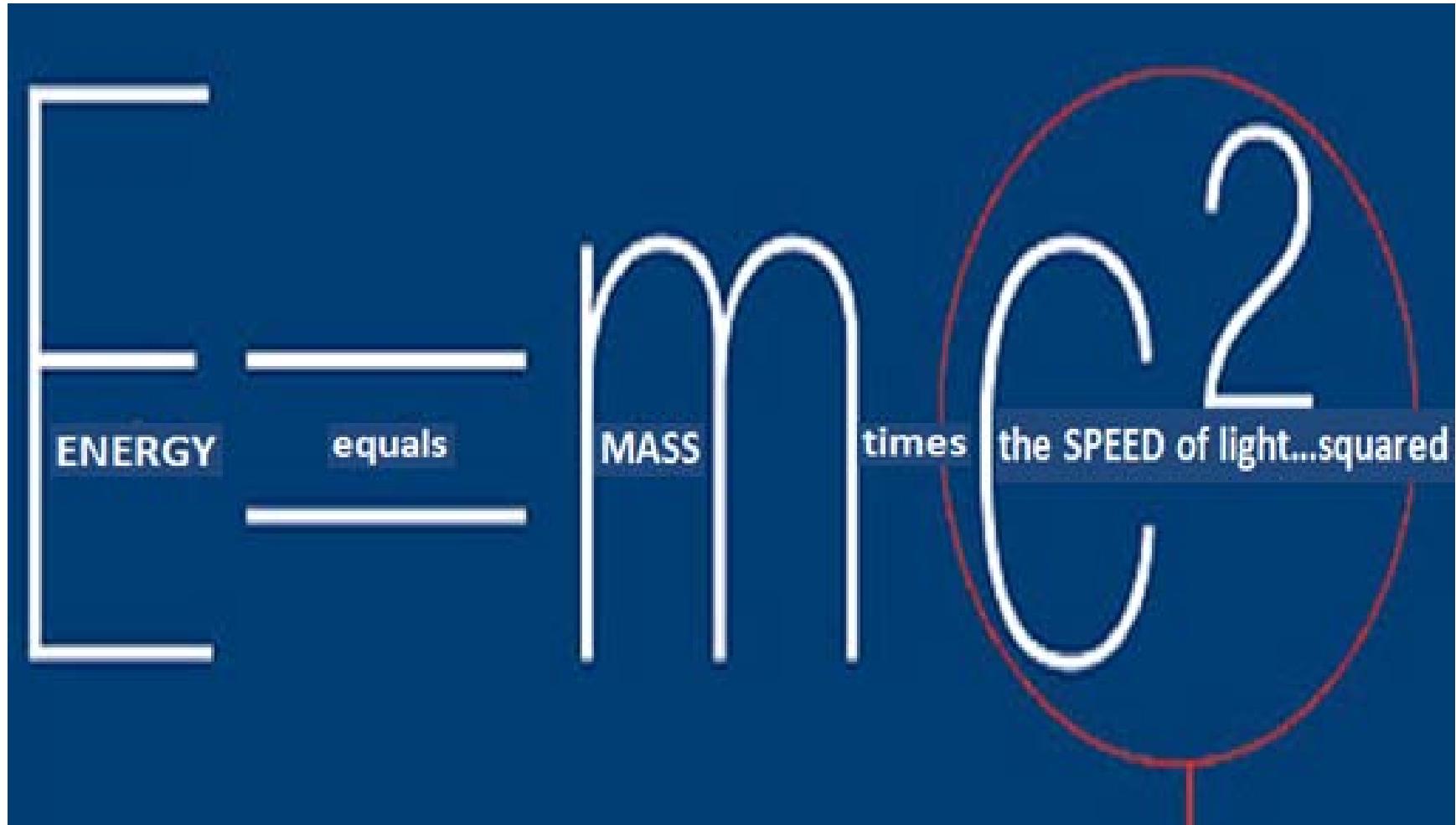
Enact emergency election plan quickly to ensure compliance with the state and federal election calendar.



Well-organized speedy teamwork



ELEMENTS IMPORTANT TO HARRIS COUNTY'S RECOVERY



Election equipment will be stored at Reliant Arena

Tuesday, September 14, 2010



HOUSTON -- Reliant Arena will be the temporary warehouse for Harris County voting equipment.

**Quickly finding
and readying a
temporary
location from
where Harris
County could
gear-up for the
election.**



09/24/2010

Swift execution of inter-local cooperation agreements between Harris County and various counties for loan of voting equipment.



Harris County clerk asks to borrow election equipment in wake of fire

khous.com

Posted on September 3, 2010 at 6:13 PM

Voting Booths Arrive



September 20, 2010

by: Bill Stamps

**Prompt and secure delivery
of borrowed, purchased and
leased voting equipment**

The first truck of voting equipment loaned to Harris County has arrived. has more. A number of neighboring counties are pitching in to help after a fire destroyed all of Harris County's voting machines.



VOTING MACHINE FIX

Election Day Equipment ready for Delivery to Precincts!



10/19/2010

Election Judge JBCs, paper ballots, poll books
and supplies ready for pickup!



10/31/2010

THE RESULTS OF HARRIS COUNTY'S PLAN TO OBTAIN VOTING EQUIPMENT



County geared up for election with donated machines



STEVE MARK

A relieved Harris County Clerk Beverly Kaufman stands with replacement equipment for Harris County's general election.

ap

Posted: Monday, September 20, 2010 12:00 am | Updated: 11:59 pm, Sat Nov 20, 2010.

Overall, 11 counties provided 384 JBCs, 1009 eSlates and 266 eSlate DAUs. The vast majority of the equipment was obtained about a month after the fire.

In addition, other non-eSlate counties provided 1,675 ballot boxes with locks and keys and 4,175 voting booths to make the implementation of the paper ballot option on Election Day possible



Trail

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Bexar offers old voting equipment to fire-stricken county

By John W. Gonzalez

Published 10:17 p.m., Tuesday, August 31, 2010



Bexar County elections officials extended a helping hand Tuesday to counterparts in Houston, where a warehouse fire destroyed most of Harris County's voting equipment last week.

Suntron Corporation, Hart InterCivic Complete Voting Machines for Harris County's 2010 General Election

Marketwire News Releases

Published: 11/01/10 05:00 AM EDT

4,800 New Voting Machines Delivered On-Time Following Devastating August Warehouse Fire



Election equipment vendor Hart InterCivic worked around the clock to deliver new equipment on time for election

**Quick, efficient
and smart
implementation
of a post-
disaster
emergency
election plan by
the Harris
County Clerk's
office ensured a
legal election in
Harris County.**

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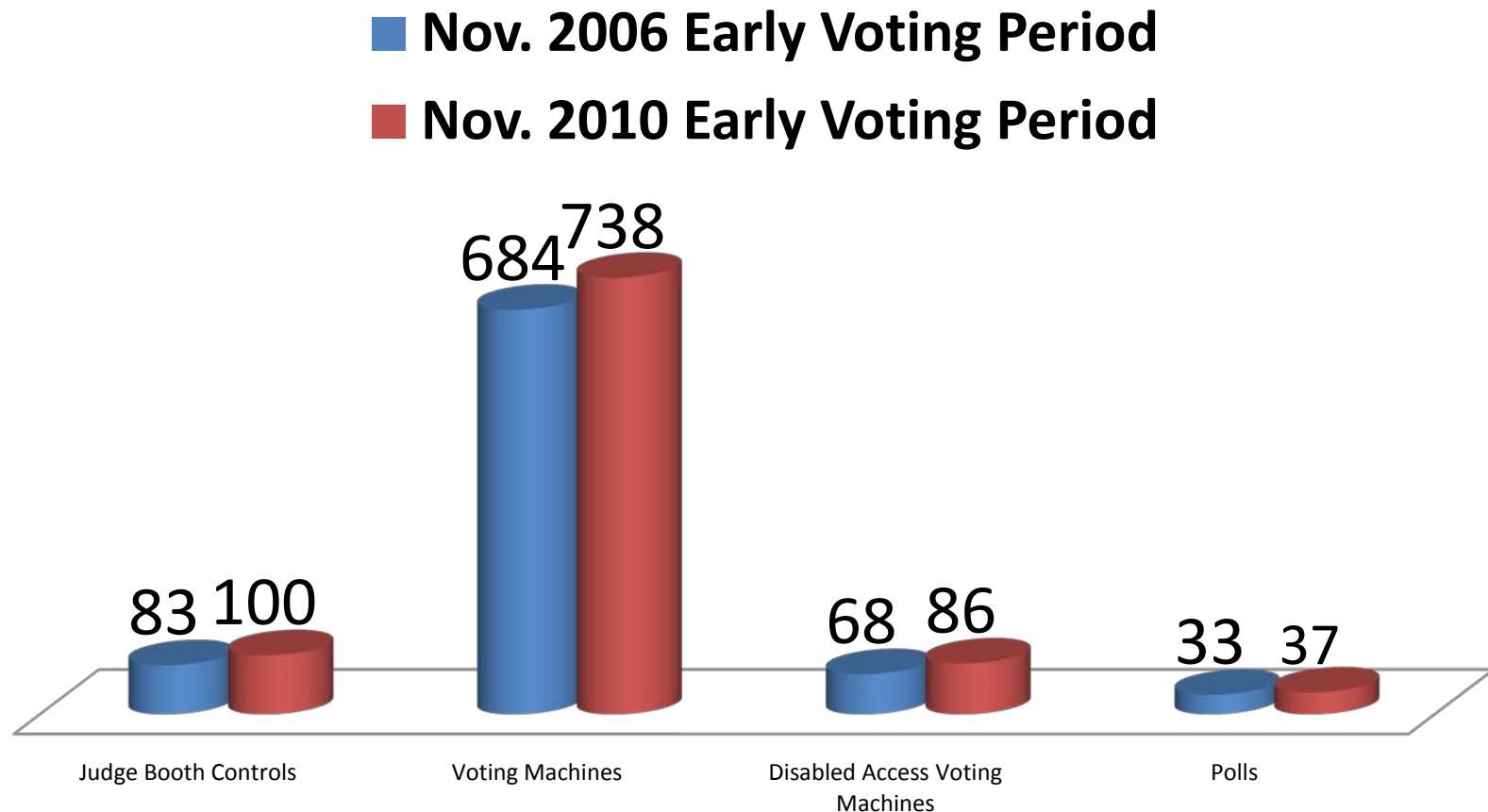
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U.S. Department of Justice approves
Harris County election plan



ELECTION
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11 NEWS

The deployment of voting equipment in Harris County during the early voting period in the 2010 election was equal to the 2006 mid-term election.



The use of electronic voting machines and paper ballots and privacy booths provided Harris County voters virtually the same number of election day voting booths per a poll as in the previous mid-term election.

	Polling Locations	Judge Booth Controls	Voting Machines	Disabled Access Voting Machines	Paper Ballot Privacy Booths	Total Voting Booths Available Per a Poll
Nov. 2006 Election Day Equipment Allocation	731	1,462	5,461	731	0	0
Nov. 2010 Election Day Equipment Allocation	736	1,472	3,791	736	610,000	933

Harris County met the challenge of replacing the lost voting equipment.



Elections Officials Say They're Ready



November 1, 2010

by: [Bill Stamps](#)

Thousands of Houstonians are expected to head to the polls tomorrow. Harris County Elections officials aren't expecting any problems, but say they're prepared for whatever might arise. Bill Stamps spoke with County Clerk Beverly Kaufman who is presiding over her last election.

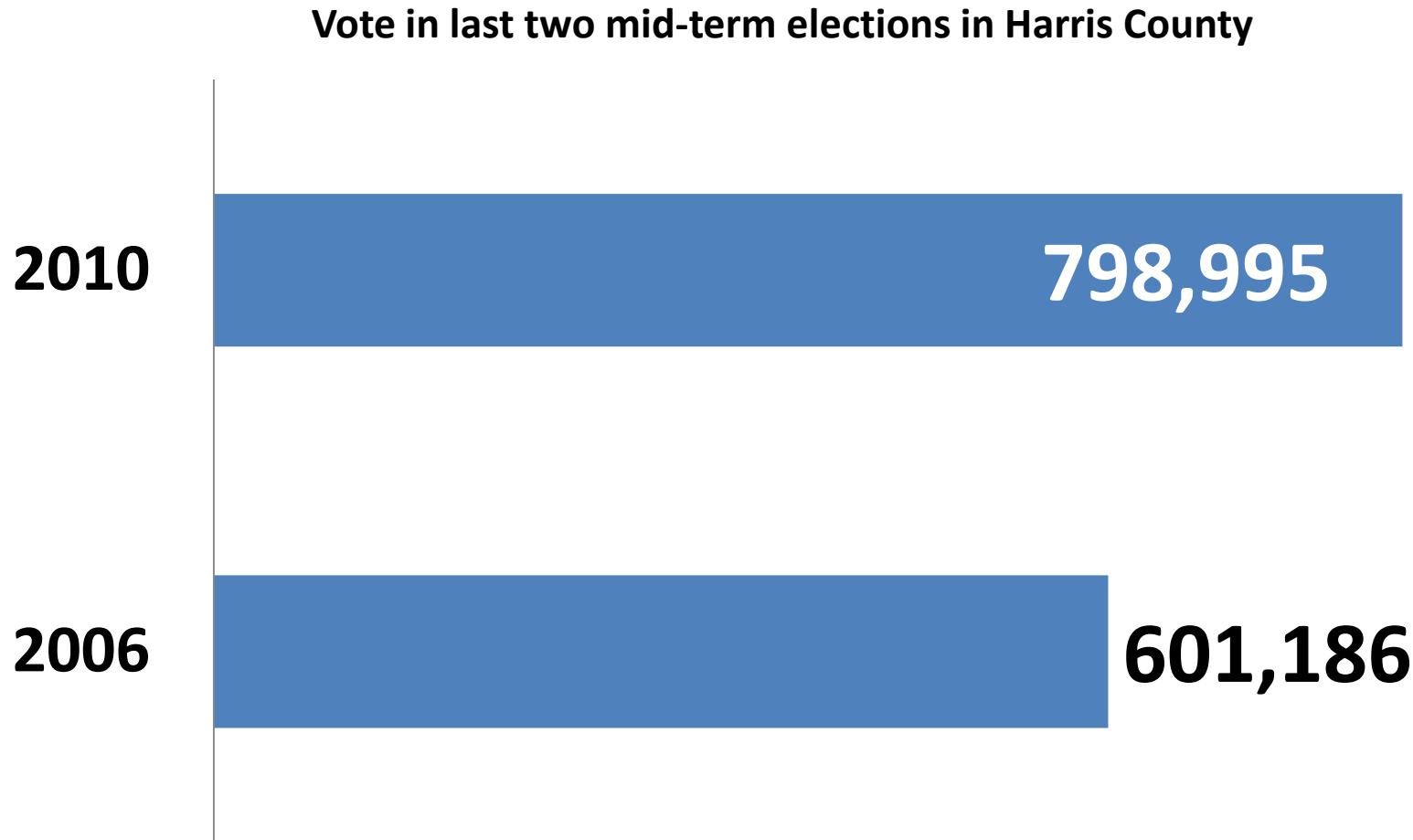
listen now:



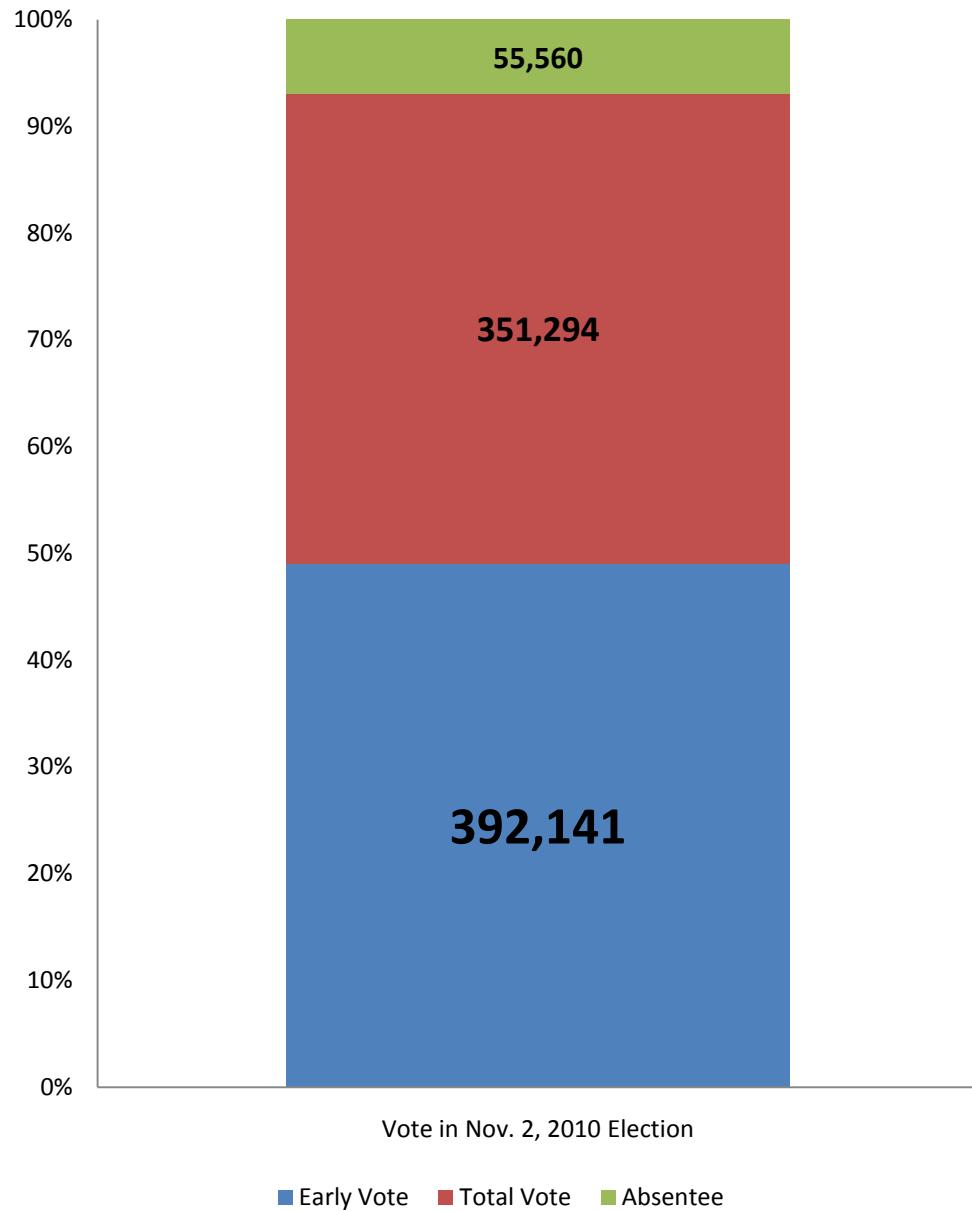
THE RESULTS



**In the 2010 mid-term election in Harris County,
the vote was up 33 percent compared to 2006.**



**Approximately
half of the
798,995 voters
who
participated in
the 2010
midterm
election in
Harris County
opted to vote
during the
early voting
period.**



The early voting result underlines the importance of the County Clerk's office emphasis to conduct early voting in manner which was familiar to voters.

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Harris County breaks early-voting records for non-presidential election year



6:04 80°
khoun

**On Election Day,
the eSlate
electronic voting
system was the
principal method of
voting in Harris
County. Still, paper
ballots were also
deployed at every
poll, but only 9,634
voters (2.8%) chose
to vote via the
paper option.**



THE PRAISE: PUBLIC ACCOLADES



Local compliments for chief election officer of Harris County.

chron | Editorial

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2 Comments  4

Job well done: Veteran Harris County Clerk Kaufman retires after a crowning achievement

Copyright 2010 Houston Chronicle
Jan. 5, 2011, 7:40PM



From Blaze to Praise



THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

2010

Voting Officials Delivered Despite Losing Machines

by Julian Aquilar | 11/3/2010

Statewide acknowledgement of meeting the challenge of affording timely and equal access to the voting process to Harris County's 1.9 million registered voters.

A Disaster can bring about reflection.

- ✓ Staff experienced in emergency management can facilitate recovery
- ✓ Precautionary work measures minimize the impact of a disaster
- ✓ Budget constraints impact a County's ability to protect voting equipment from disaster
- ✓ Nothing can be done to entirely eliminate the perils posed by unpredictable factors
- ✓ County Judges and Commissioners can be counted on to act in the public's best interest
- ✓ When a catastrophe strikes, Texans are always ready and willing to help.

Conclusion

- ✓ Approximately 800,000 individuals voted in the Nov. 2, 2010 election in Harris County. Half of those persons voted during the early voting period.
- ✓ The majority of the voting equipment during the conduct of early voting was borrowed.
- ✓ Overall, almost 30 percent of voting machines used in Harris County during the conduct of the Nov. 2, 2010 election were provided by other counties.

Thanks to sister counties and our vendor Hart InterCivic, Harris County went ...

From Blaze to Praise