

# WISCONSIN ELECTIONS COMMISSION

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**DATE:** October 12, 2016

**TO:** Wisconsin Municipal Clerks  
City of Milwaukee Election Commission  
Wisconsin County Clerks  
Milwaukee County Election Commission

**FROM:** Michael Haas  
Administrator

Allison Coakley  
Training Coordinator

**SUBJECT:** Contingency Planning and Election System Security Report  
October 2016

In 2007, the former State Elections Board prepared a report and made recommendations with respect to state, regional and local election-related contingency planning efforts and preparedness. The Report on Election-Related Contingency Planning covered both large scale and limited scope natural disasters or technology threats that may occur at or near election time.

The 2016 Report on Contingency Planning and Election System Security includes current security best practices for election IT systems, voting equipment and election night results. Emergency situations and guidance has been updated to reflect scenarios which have become more likely and which also provide a framework for preparing for other contingencies.

Each municipality should have an emergency response plan and staff has been discussing having an election related contingency plan as part of Municipal Clerk Core Training since that training curriculum was developed almost ten years ago. Plans should include normal operating procedures for election-related processes and responses to the most common emergency scenarios and emergency contact information. Plans should detail the proper handling procedure for securing ballots, poll lists, voting equipment and ballot boxes in an emergency situation.

Municipalities and counties should have plans and written procedures for securing voting equipment and collecting unofficial results. All users of state computer systems should adhere to WEC security guidelines and recommendations. Planning ahead not only prevents security incidents, but helps election officials handle them correctly if they arise.

If you have any questions, please contact the Elections Help Desk: [elections@wi.gov](mailto:elections@wi.gov) or (608) 261-2028. Thank you.