



28th Annual
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2012 Professional Practices Program

Comprehensive Voter District Notification

Albany County, Wyoming

Submitted by:

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OVERVIEW AND PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

*Wyoming Statute 22-7-104: Within five (5) days after the adoption of a resolution dividing or consolidating a precinct, or changing a precinct boundary, the county clerk shall send a certified copy of the resolution to the secretary of state and to the county chairman of each political party **and notify by mail all registered electors** receiving a new precinct number. (Emphasis added)*

The reapportionment of the Wyoming State Legislature related to population changes recorded in the 2010 census, coupled with the City of Laramie condensing their seven ward City Manager form of government to three wards and Albany County consolidating precincts and polling places to conform with these changes, resulted in the development of a specific mailing to be sent to all active registered voters within the County, 12,843 total. Our objectives were to create a mailing that would not only satisfy the statutory requirement, but also provide voters a wallet-sized card listing their new voting districts and polling place, and incorporate an absentee ballot request form to encourage voter participation in the 2012 Elections.

DESIGN:

Design began on a letter-sized mailing that would include a short note to voters, a voter registration wallet card similar to those given to all new registrants, and an absentee ballot request form that could be attached to our current half-sheet form used to track the status of absentee requests. The mailing was originally designed for a No. 10 envelope. Three horizontal perforations would be included to facilitate folding the mailing by hand and the removal of the wallet card and form by the voter. Only the voter portion or top two-thirds of the current form (see second supporting document) was incorporated into the mailing so that it could be completed and returned by the voter in either a business or regular-sized envelope. Window envelopes were quickly adopted so that addressed envelopes could not be mismatched to the voter's mailing during stuffing and sealing by the Clerk's Staff. Initially the letter to voters was prominently set at the top of the page; however, with the window envelope, the letter did not flow well around the mailing address block and insufficient white space separated the wallet card from the absentee form. The wallet card was then moved to the top portion of the page, the letter to voters to the center, and the absentee request form to the bottom portion.

Although the County did not have a Commercial Mail (bulk mail) permit, the potential cost savings for this single bulk mailing was over \$2,500. Consequently, Lincoln Printing Plus, Inc., a local printer, was consulted. In addition to having the ability to organize the bulk mailing, they could perforate, print, and fold the mailing all within their office. Further cost savings was realized by converting the layout to fit in a No. 9 envelope. This change allowed the use of evenly spaced folds that could be made as the document was printed, which also reduced the perforations to only what was needed to detach the wallet card and the absentee form. Changing these perforations from micro to macro made them more noticeable to the recipient. Clerk's Staff would stuff and seal the mailing to save on preparation costs. Lincoln Printing recommended self-sealing envelopes, which greatly increased the Staff's efficiency during the short statutory window.

The No. 9 window envelopes were designed with a unique County Clerk return address. By adding "Chief Elections Official" to the standard "Albany County Clerk" title, the recipient would hopefully not confuse the mailing with other Clerk's business. These window envelopes also had the added benefit of having a similar appearance to a mailed check, which may have increased the likelihood that they would be opened. As some of the mailings would not qualify for bulk mail, Lincoln Printing designed a bulk mail imprint small enough to be covered by a first class stamp; thus enabling all envelopes to be printed as a batch.

DATA POPULATION AND POSTAGE:

A mail merge was used to populate the 21 fields throughout the mailing (see first supporting document). Lincoln Printing would have access to the files so only public information, as defined by Wyoming Statute 22-2-113 (d), was populated. As address verification was required to qualify for bulk mail, an encryption standard was used to protect the data file. An intelligent mail barcode was generated for all verified addresses, further reducing the postage rate. Non-verified addresses did not qualify for bulk mail and were sent first class.

To qualify for standard commercial mail rates, a \$0.17 per piece reduction from first class commercial rates of \$0.42, the mailing had to be similar for multiple groups of recipients. After removing the Voter ID field, a unique number to each registered voter, large sets of people would receive a mailing listing the same District, Precinct, voting districts, and party affiliation, thereby qualifying the mailing for the standard commercial rate.

An entire day was devoted to completing the mail merge. The address file was sorted by zip code and separated into multiple mailing trays. An Adobe PDF was generated for the letters that would be included in each tray so that they could be easily printed, stuffed, sealed, and mailed, without mixing trays. Upon delivery of the files to Lincoln Printing via USB drive, two days were required to print the mailing. Three days after the Albany County Commissioners approved the changes, the notice to all registered electors was generated, printed, and mailed.

COST ANALYSIS:

Conducting a cost analysis between the approach taken and generating a mailing entirely in-house to send first class, resulted in more than an \$1,800 savings. The \$0.45 fee per bulk mail returned and the cost to re-send mailings to people who moved accounted for the majority of the difference from the \$2,500 potential savings. Attempting to print the volume of envelopes and notices, while folding, stuffing, sealing, and organizing the mailing, would have been extremely difficult in the five day statutory period and cost prohibitive due to special allocation of Clerk's Office Staff and resources. The cost associated with contracting out the printing and other services to Lincoln Printing was minimal.

WAYS TO IMPROVE:

Although the intent of the mailing was to notify voters of changes to their Precincts or Polling Places, inclusion of the 2012 election dates would have been beneficial to the voters. Due to the revisions resulting from the mailing address verification, specific instructions asking voters to compare their mailing address to the address populated in the absentee ballot request form would encourage more voters to call the Elections Office to update their voter record, a database change that requires verification from the voter. The partnership with a local printer was invaluable; planning started three months prior to sending the mailing. Finally, Electronic Return Service has not yet been used for large mailings in our area. The service charges \$0.06 per piece for an electronic list of returned bulk mail and \$0.16 more to receive the actual piece in addition to the electronic list, a savings of \$175-\$300 based on the option chosen.

CONCLUSION:

Not only was the mailing sent two days prior to the statutory deadline, but the wallet card and absentee ballot request form were incorporated without cost increase. During the three weeks following the mailing, over seven hundred absentee ballot requests were received. Furthermore, more voters with changes to their address received their mailing and have called our office to update their voter record. Overall, the mailing surpassed our objectives, the qualitative savings was immense, and the entire project was complete at a cost of \$0.46 per registered voter.

**Albany County Clerk &
Chief Elections Official**

Jackie R. Gonzales

Albany County Courthouse - Elections
525 E. Grand Ave., Suite 202
Laramie, WY 82070



Phone: (307) 721-2546
Fax: (307) 721-2544

Step 1:
Detach

Step 3:
Fold

Step 3:
Fold

Party: Republican Date: 05/01/2012

Albany County, Wyoming

Name of Voter: THEODORE CRAMER

District – Precinct: 46-2

Ward: 3 House District: 46 Senate District: 10

Polling Place: Laramie Recreation Center

To change name, address, or party affiliation, visit the Albany County Clerk's Office - Elections Department in the Courthouse.

Step 1:
Detach

THEODORE CRAMER
507 S 15th St
Laramie, WY 82070-4204



NOTICE

IMPORTANT ELECTION INFORMATION

Wyoming Statute 22-7-104 requires all registered electors be notified of changes to their voting districts and polling places.

Your new voter registration card above is for you to carry if you wish (you do not need to present it to vote).

For your convenience, Absentee Ballot(s) may be requested for 2012 elections by detaching and returning to our office the lowest portion of this letter. Absentee Ballot requests are accepted throughout the year and may also be completed at our website, <http://www.co.albany.wy.us/elections.aspx>, over the phone, and by visiting our office. You may also vote at the Courthouse up to 40 days before an election, but not on Election Day. When completing the attached form, enter your date of birth and phone number, select the elections you would prefer to vote Absentee, indicate where you would like your ballot(s) mailed, and sign and date the form. Note your voted ballot must be *received* at the Courthouse by 7 p.m. on Election Day to be counted.

If any information in this letter is incorrect or to update your address, name, or party affiliation, bring your photo ID to the Albany County Clerk's Office – Elections Department located in the Courthouse. Our office is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Request for Wyoming Absentee Ballot (W.S. 22-9-101 – 22-9-105)

Voter ID:

Last Name: CRAMER First Name: THEODORE Middle: A

Residence Address: 507 S 15TH ST City: LARAMIE Zip: 82070 County: Albany

Date of Birth (Required): Phone Number: Currently In Military

Party Affiliation: Republican All 2012 Elections* Primary Election General Election

Mail Ballot To: City: State/Country: Zip:

I hereby state that I am a registered voter and entitled to vote in the election(s) indicated above.

Voter Signature: Date:

Print Name if signing on behalf of Voter: Relationship to Voter:

*All 2012 Elections for which you are a qualified elector (includes both Primary and General Elections).

Request for Wyoming Absentee Ballot (W.S. 22-9-101 — 105)

Voter ID

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|----------------|--|--|
| Last Name | | First Name | | Middle | | | |
| Residence Address | | City | | Zip | County | | |
| Date of Birth (Required) | | Phone Number | | <input type="checkbox"/> Currently in Military | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Republican <input type="checkbox"/> Unaffiliated <input type="checkbox"/> Democrat <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Libertarian | | Requesting ballot(s) <input type="checkbox"/> All Elections (within the calendar year for which you are a qualified elector) for Calendar Year <input type="checkbox"/> Primary Election <input type="checkbox"/> General Election <i>(check all that apply)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Special Election — Date: _____ | | | | | |
| Mail Ballot to: | | City | State | Country | Zip | | |
| I hereby state that I am a registered voter and entitled to vote in the election(s) indicated above. | | | | Request Received By: _____ | | | |
| Voter Signature _____ Date _____ | | | | Method: <input type="checkbox"/> In-Office <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | | |
| Print Name if requesting on behalf of Voter | | | | Relationship to Voter | | | |
| Date: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected Request Processed By: _____ | | Primary | Ballot Voted in Person on _____ Ballot Taken in Person on _____ Ballot Mailed Out _____ Other: _____ | | General | Ballot Voted in Person on _____ Ballot Taken in Person on _____ Ballot Mailed Out _____ Other: _____ | |
| District _____ Precinct _____ Ward _____ House/Senate _____ / _____ | | | Ballot Voted in Person on _____ Ballot Taken in Person on _____ Ballot Mailed Out _____ Other: _____ | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Military <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent FPCA <input type="checkbox"/> Overseas Military <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary FPCA <input type="checkbox"/> Overseas Citizen <input type="checkbox"/> Delivery Designee Information Attached | |