League of Women Voters® of Texas

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Texas County Election Website Evaluation Update

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Update
## LWV-Texas County Elections Website Review Update
23% Improvement in Provision of Adequate Elections and Voter ID Information Since August

Austin, November 1—The League of Women Voters of Texas updated it's highly acclaimed survey of Texas county websites. The League found 23% overall improvement in the information provided about elections and voter ID information from late August to late October on the existing 234 official county websites.

Elaine Wiant, president of the Texas League said, "We are encouraged that two thirds of county websites meet the League's minimum criteria for voter and election information informed citizens need to vote this election season." However, only one third (82, 35%) of the websites provided basic information about the new voter ID requirements, up from one fifth in August. "Confusion about the new voter ID requirements is being reported at polling places during early voting. Inadequate information on county websites foresaw the potential for confusion," said Wiant.

Finding the election-related information was easy on three fourths (78%) of the 234 websites. One hundred and two (44%) had a recognizable word or icon on the home page that linked to a page displaying elections information.

Two thirds (149, 65%) of county websites now provide voting dates, times, and locations as well as a sample ballot, up from 37% in August. And one third (78) provide election and voter ID information in both English and Spanish, nearly twice as many as in August (40, 17%).

Adequacy of Election Information on Official County Websites in Texas, August & October 2016
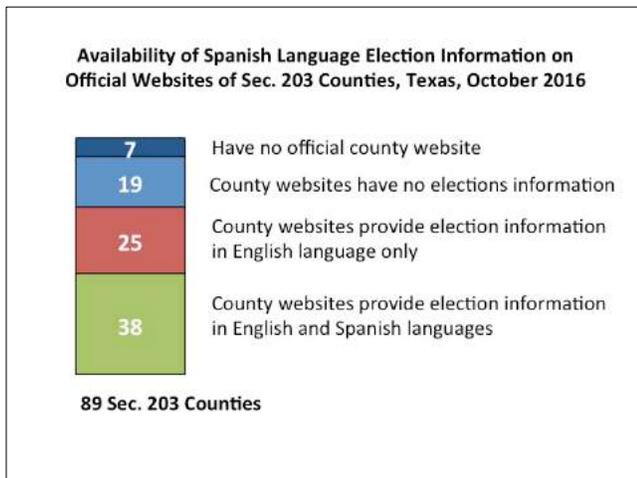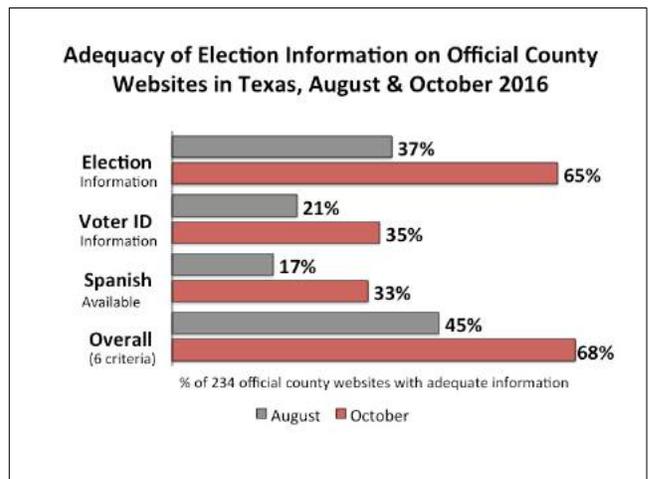
The availability of Spanish language elections information on official websites of those counties under Section 203 of the federal Voting Rights Act remains a serious concern. Less than half (38) of the 89 counties required to provide information in Spanish had websites that did so.

Of the 202 official county websites that provide elections information, half (121, 52%) improved their overall evaluation score since the first review in August. The number of county websites rated "Outstanding" for providing superb election and voter ID information more than doubled, increasing from 14 to 33. Those rated "Honorable Mention" for their excellent information also more than doubled, from 29 to 66.

Availability of Spanish Language Election Information on Official Websites of Sec. 203 Counties, Texas, October 2016

7	Have no official county website
19	County websites have no elections information
25	County websites provide election information in English language only
38	County websites provide election information in English and Spanish languages

89 Sec. 203 Counties

Introduction

As a nonpartisan political organization, the League of Women Voters of Texas (LWV-TX) encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government. Essential to informed citizens who vote is election information. This second review was undertaken to assess progress in the online availability and adequacy of election information on official county websites in Texas since the initial review in late August 2016.

Methods

During the last week of October 2016, an online survey of the 234 existing official Texas county websites was conducted. Official county websites were not located for 20 (8%) of the 254 counties (Atascosa, Baylor, Childress, Comanche, Foard, Hall, Hardeman, Hudspeth, Kent, King, Loving, Martin, Mitchell, Motley, Reagan, Reeves, Roberts, Schliecher, Stonewall, Throckmorton Counties).

Two LWV-TX volunteers administered a 6-item, closed-response questionnaire that measured the adequacy of election information on the websites. The items measured criteria that were adapted from *County Election Website Evaluation,* a survey conducted by Ballotpedia, The Encyclopedia of American Politics, in 2012 (https://Ballotpedia.org/County_election_website_evaluations).

Each of the six criteria was rated on a scale of 0 to 5 based on yes/no or a predetermined definition of value. A seventh item related to the presence/absence of a link to a LWV website provided the opportunity for 5 bonus points. The criteria and rating scales are found on the next page.

Following completion of online data entry, the data were audited to detect and correct duplicate entries, anomalies, contradictions, and inconsistencies. Finally, data were summarized using scores, means, and percentages.

Criteria

A. Does the county have a website page that displays election information? (yes/no)

> 5-Yes   *Note.* It was not necessary to have a dedicated subpage for the information.
> 0-No

B. How easy is it to find election information?

> 5-*Perfec*t: A recognizable word or icon on the HOME PAGE links to a page that displays elections information
> 4-*Very* good: A quick-links list, department directory, or list of services provides a recognizable link to election information (e.g., elections, voter registration, etc.)
> 3-*Good but could improve:* Takes more than 3 clicks to get to elections information
> 2-*Fair:* Takes more than 4 clicks to get to elections information
> 1-*Bare minimum:* Had to use the SEARCH box to find elections information
> 0-*Inadequte:* Could not locate election information

C. How adequate is the election information provided?

> 5-*Perfec*t: Items 1-7 provided
> 4-*Very* good: Items 1-6 provided
> 3-*Good but could improve:* Items 1-5 provided
> 2-*Fair:* Items 1-4 provided but <u>some</u> information is out of date
> 1-*Bare minimum:* Items 1-3 provided
> 0-*Inadequate:* Less than 3 items provided or <u>all</u> information is out of date

Election Information Items
(1) Election Day & early voting dates
(2) Deadlines for voter registration application, mail ballot application, and receipt of mail ballot
(3) Polling locations for early voting & Election Day
(4) Sample ballot
(5) Military voter information
(6) Most recent election results
(7) Archive of past election results

D. How adequate is voter ID information?

5-*Perfec*t: Items 1-7 provided
4-*Very* good: Items 1-6 provided
3-*Good but could improve:* Items 1-5 provided
2-*Fair:* Items 1-4 provided
1-*Bare minimum:* Items 1-3 provided
0-*Inadequate:* Less than 3 items provided

> *Voter ID Items*
> (1) List of seven acceptable photo voter IDs
> (2) Photo IDs must be no more than <u>4 years</u> old
> (3) List of other documents accepted if no photo ID and sign an Impediment Declaration form
> (4) Name on ID and voter registration card must be substantially the same but not identical
> (5) Voter addresses on ID and official list of voters need not match at time of voting
> (6) Election officials and poll workers may not question you about voter ID issues
> (7) Reasonable Impediment Declaration form

E. Is a link to the Secretary of State website provided?

5-Yes
0-No

F. Is election information <u>and</u> voter ID information provided (a) in Spanish <u>or</u> (b) the link to the Secretary of State Spanish language website provided?

5-Yes
0-No

G. Is a link to a League of Women Voters website provided? (bonus points)

5-Yes
0-No

Results

Results by Criterion

A. Does the county have a website page that displays election information?

Over three fourths (80%) of Texas counties had a website that provided election information. The information could be found either (a) on a dedicated elections subpage, (b) as part of a county office subpage (county clerk, elections administrator, or tax assessor/collector), or (c) a dedicated elections website, such as http://pottercountyvotes.com. (See Table 1.)

Table 1. Number of Counties* With and Without a Website Page That
Displays Election Information, Texas, October 2016 (N = 254)

Election Website Page	Number	Percent
5 - Yes	202	80
0 - No	52	20
Total	254	100

*Includes 20 counties with no official website.

B. How easy is it to find election information?

It was relatively easy to find election information at three fourths (78%) of the county websites. Close to half (44%) had a recognizable word or an icon on the home page that linked to a subpage that displayed election information. Another one third (34%) had a quick links list, department directory, or directory of services with a recognizable word that linked to the election subpage (Table 2).

Table 2. Number of County Websites, by Ease of Locating
Election Information, Texas, October 2016 (N = 234)

Ease	Number	Percent	Cumulative %
5 - Perfect	102	44	44
4 - Very good	80	34	**78**
3 - Good but could improve	18	8	86
2 - Fair	3	1	87
1 - Bare minimum	0	0	87
0 - Inadequate	31	13	100
Total	234	100	

C. How adequate is the election information?

Nearly two thirds (65%) of county websites provided at least minimally adequate election information, defined as the provision of the following four items:

- Election Day and early voting dates
- Deadlines for voter registration application, mail ballot application, and receipt of mail ballot
- Polling locations for early voting and Election Day
- Sample ballot(s)

See Table 3.

Fully adequate election information would also include election results (most recent and past) and voter information for military and overseas, special needs, and student voters. While the bar for fully adequate election information may seem high, it is a set of information the League believes is essential to voters in each county.

Table 3. Number of County Websites by Adequacy of Election
Information Provided, Texas, October 2016 (*N* = 234)

Ease	Number	%	Cumulative %
5 - Perfect	60	26	26
4 - Very good	21	9	35
3 - Good but could improve	13	6	41
2 - Fair	55	24	**65**
1 - Bare minimum	24	10	75
0 - Inadequate	61	26	101*
Total	234	101*	

*Adds to > 100% due to rounding.

D. How adequate is voter ID information?

As of the end of October 2016, one third (35%) of county websites provided at least minimally adequate information related to the newly relaxed voter identification requirements for the November elections (Table 4). To be adequate, the voter ID information should include:

- List of seven acceptable photo voter IDs
- Photo IDs must be no more than 4 years old**
- List of other documents accepted if no photo ID and sign an Impediment Declaration form**
- Name on ID and voter registration card must be substantially the same but not identical
- Voter addresses on ID and official list of voters need not match at time of voting****

Fully adequate information would also inform voters that:

- Election officials cannot question a voter about the use of an ID type**
- Poll watchers may never question a voter about Voter ID issues**

**New or ****emphasized in Veasey, *et al.,* v. Abbott, Case 2:13-cv-00193, D.E. 895 (S.D. Tex. 2016 Aug 10).

Table 4. Number of County Websites by Adequacy of Voter ID
Information Provided, Texas, October 2016 (*N* = 234)

Ease	Number	Percent	Cumulative %
5 - Perfect	2	1	1
4 - Very good	7	3	4
3 - Good but could improve	73	31	**35**
2 - Fair	6	2	37
1 - Bare minimum	54	23	60
0 - Inadequate	92	39	99*
Total	234	99*	

*Adds to < 100% due to rounding.

E. Is a link to the Secretary of State website provided?

A large majority (80%) of the county websites provided a link to (a) a page within the Texas Secretary of State website (www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/) that provided voter registration information or voter ID information or (b) www.VoteTexas.gov (Table 5).

Table 5. Number of County Websites With and Without a Link to the
Secretary of State Website, Texas, October 2016 (*N* = 234)

Link to VoteTexas.gov	Number	Percent
5 - Yes	187	80
0 - No	47	20
Total	234	100

F. Is election information <u>and</u> voter ID information provided (a) in Spanish <u>or</u> (b) the link to the Secretary of State Spanish language website provided?

One third (33%) of county websites provided election and voter ID information in Spanish or a link to the Secretary of State Spanish language website, www.votetexas.gov/es/ (Table 6).

Table 6. Number of County Websites With and Without Spanish Language
Election Information, Texas, October 2016 (*N* = 234)

Spanish Language Information	Number	Percent
Yes	78	33
No	156	67
Total	234	100

G. Is a link to a League of Women Voters website provided? (bonus points)

Presence of a link to a LWV website on the county website provided the opportunity for 5 bonus points toward the mean adequacy score. Twenty-one (9%) websites had a link to a Texas or national League website (Table 7).

Table 7. Numbers of Counties With and Without a Link to a League
of Women Voters Website, Texas, October 2016 (*N* = 234)

Link to a LWV Website	Number	Percent
Yes	21	9
No	213	91
Total	234	100

Overall Performance

A mean score was calculated for each county website by adding points scored on the seven items and dividing by six, given that Item 7 contributed bonus points. Overall adequacy was defined as a mean score of 3 or higher. In all, 160 (68%) county websites provided adequate election and voter ID information.

Table 8. Number of County Websites by Overall Adequacy of Election
& Voter ID Information Provided, Texas, October 2016 (*N* = 234)

Ease	Number	Percent	Cumulative %
5 - Perfect	33	14	14
4 - Very good	66	28	42
3 - Good but could improve	61	26	**68**
2 - Fair	44	19	87
1 - Bare minimum	23	10	96
0 - Inadequate	7	3	99*
Total	234	99*	

*Adds to < 100% due to rounding.

Summary of Results

Two hundred and two (80%) of the 254 counties in Texas had a website that provided election information, including the 20 counties with no official website. Among the 234 counties with websites, it was relatively easy to find election and/or voter registration information at 182 (78%) websites. One hundred forty-nine (65%) of the 234 county websites provided at least minimally adequate election information while 82 (25%) provided at least minimally adequate voter ID information. Eighty percent (187) of the county websites provided a link to election-related information on one of two Texas Secretary of State websites. One third (78; 33%) of the county websites provided election and voter ID information in Spanish or a link to the Secretary of State Spanish language website. Considering the six criteria overall, 160 (68%) county websites provided adequate election and voter ID information. In addition, 21 (9%) county websites provided a link to a League of Women Voters website.

Discussion

An online survey of the 234 existing official Texas county websites was conducted during the last week of October 2016. The 6-item, closed-response questionnaire measured the adequacy of election information on the websites, using criteria adapted from the *County Election Website Evaluation,* a survey conducted by Ballotpedia, The Encyclopedia of American Politics, in 2012. When considering presence of a website page with election information, ease of locating the information, adequacy of election and voter ID information, presence of a link to Texas Secretary of State election information, and availability of Spanish a language translation, 160 (68%) county websites provided adequate election and voter ID information.

The bar for excellent election and voter ID information may seem high. However, it is based on a set of information that the League believes is essential to voters in each county.

The evaluation did not consider the challenges many counties encounter in providing and maintaining a website (e.g., lack of funding, adequate staff). However, the results of this second review found a substantial 23% overall improvement in online provision of elections and voter ID information from the last week of August to the last week of October.

The evaluation criteria considered the accessibility and adequacy of elections-related information, but not its readability. A website may have content that meets these League criteria for accessibility and adequacy, but the content may need improvement in its clarity, readability, and ease of use. A future study should also consider the readability level of the election and voter ID information provided on official county websites.

Recognizing that individual county websites are at various levels of development in providing election and voter ID information, we offer the following suggestions to elections officials in the spirit of continuous quality improvement. And we commend the Texas Association of Counties (TAC) for their provision of information and technology assistance and resources (including website design and hosting) to over 140 Texas counties through the County Information Resources Agency (CIRA). (For more information, see www.cira.state.tx.us/.)

Recommendations

County Elections Officials

1. *Election subpage.* Dedicate a website page solely to election information, including voter ID information.

2. *Easy accessibility.* Make election information easy to find on the county website.
   a. The fewer the clicks to the information the easier it is.
   b. Use a recognizable word or icon on the home page that links to the information. For example: "Elections," "voting," "voter and election information," "elections & voter registration"
   c. Many voters do not know that election information might be found by clicking "County Clerk" or "Tax Assessor/Collector."
   d. Add "vote," "register to vote," and "request a mail ballot" to the frequently asked questions list, sometimes labeled "How do I…," "I want to…," or "FAQs."

3. *Elections information.* Adequate information includes:
   a. Dates for the upcoming Election Day and early voting period
   b. Deadlines for voter registration application, mail ballot application, and receipt of mail ballot for the upcoming election
   c. Polling locations for early voting and Election Day
   d. Sample ballots
   e. Election results for most recent and past elections
   f. Information for particular voters
      i. Military and overseas voters
      ii. Student voters
      iii. Voters with special needs
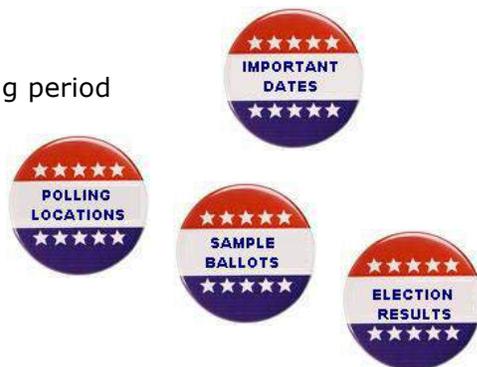
4. *Voter ID information.* Adequate information includes:
   a. Lists of acceptable voter IDs
      i. Seven acceptable photo voter IDs (no more than 4 years old)
      ii. Other documents accepted if no photo ID and sign Reasonable Impediment Declaration form
      iii. Copy of the Reasonable Impediment Declaration form
   b. Voting caveats
      i. Name on ID and voter registration card must be substantially the same but not identical
      ii. Voter addresses on ID and official list of voters need not match at time of voting
      iii. Election officials cannot question a voter about the use of an ID type
      iv. Poll workers may never question a voter about Voter ID issues
   c. Note: Voter ID information may be provided by a link to the Secretary of State page.

5. *Spanish language accessibility.* As mandated by Tex. Elec. Code § 272.005, election materials must be printed in Spanish as well as English. The law does not mention bilingual websites. However, it is recommended that:
   a. Copies of materials published online in English should also be published in Spanish.
   b. If the local county website election subpage is not bilingual, a link to the Secretary of State Spanish language website www.votetexas.gov/es/ should be prominently displayed.

6. *Link to Secretary of State election information.* The Texas Secretary of State provides comprehensive, detailed election and voter ID information and answers to frequently asked questions about voting. We recommend adding a link to www.VoteTexas.gov.

7. *Link to nonpartisan voters guides*. In addition to official election and voter ID information, a voter needs access to nonpartisan information on candidates and issues to be voted upon in the upcoming election. We highly recommend linking voters to nonpartisan voters guide(s).

   The League of Women Voters produces voters guides on statewide and local races and ballot issues. The League is a nonpartisan, political organization that does not support any political candidate or political party. It only supports issues that have undergone study and member consensus.
   a. Statewide voters guides are published at www.LWVTexas.org.
   b. Voters guides for local races will be published on local League websites. See www.LWVTexas.org/local_leagues.html to locate the local League website that serves your county.

c. Voters guides for statewide races and local races (where available) are published in www.VOTE411.org, an online voters guide sponsored by the LWV Education Fund.

8. *Additional suggestions.* We encourage county election officials to:
    a. Use the Texas Secretary of State voter ID educational materials found at www.VoteTexas.gov/resources/voter-id-education-materials/.
    b. Review the legal requirements for Texas county websites found at www.cira.state.tx.us/default.aspx?name=cira.Education.WebsiteTips.
    c. Use the series of Field Guides to Ensuring Voter Intent, described as "design guidelines that election officials can really use, based on solid research and best practices." The Center for Civic Design has published 11 field guides ranging from designing websites and ballots to communicating with voters and poll workers in print and online. The guides are found at http://civicdesign.org/fieldguides/.

Texas Secretary of State

We commend the Office of the Texas Secretary of State for providing educational resources related to military and overseas voters, voter ID, and other informational pamphlets on voters with special needs and early voting found at www.VoteTexas.gov/resources/. We ask the Secretary of State to:

1. Continue its leadership with county elections officials and:
    a. Encourage local elections officials to update their websites in a timely fashion related to election and voter ID information.
    b. Publish an online manual of best practices for county election websites, including templates related to voter information topics.

2. Increase the website readability of information provided to voters on www.VoteTexas.gov.
    a. The Nielson Norman Group identified three key barriers to website readability (Gupta, 2015, ¶7, https://vwo.com/blog/website-copy-readability/):
        i. Legibility (clarity of visual design and landscape)
        ii. Readability (complexity of words and sentence structure)
        iii. Comprehension (ease of understanding the text and drawing valid conclusions)
    b. According to Nielson, "Users won't read web content unless the text is clear, the words and sentences are simple, and the information is easy to understand" (2015, ¶1). Nielson provides guidelines and testing resources for legibility, readability, and comprehension at www.nngroup.com/articles/legibility-readability-comprehension/.
    c. Most documents should aim for a Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level of 7.0 to 8.0, meaning that a seventh or eighth grader can understand the material. See http://tinyurl.com/j55aue8.

Example

The Voter ID information below found on the VoteTexas.gov website has a Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level of 21.25, meaning that a person would need a doctoral degree to fully understand it.

Frequently Asked Questions

On August 10, 2016, a federal district court entered an order changing the voter identification requirements for all elections held in Texas after August 10, 2016 until further notice. As a result, voters who possess an acceptable form of photo identification for voting listed below are still required to present it in order to vote in person in all Texas elections. The acceptable form of photo identification may be expired up to four years. Voters who do not possess an acceptable form of photo identification and cannot obtain one of the forms of acceptable photo identification listed below due to a reasonable impediment, may present a supporting form of identification and execute a Reasonable Impediment Declaration, noting the voter's reasonable impediment to obtaining an acceptable form of photo identification, and stating that the voter is the same person on the presented supporting form of identification.

From www.votetexas.gov/register-to-vote/need-id/

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3. In the long term, improve the menu-driven user interface of www.VoteTexas.gov. The user interface is one of the most important parts of an election website because it determines how easily a voter can find the information sought.

Texas Association of Counties

We recognize and appreciate the information and technology assistance and resources provided by the Texas Association of Counties (TAC) to over 140 Texas counties through the County Information Resources Agency (CIRA; www.cira.state.tx.us/). We thank TAC for updating the voter ID links and information on its Resources for County Websites subpage and encourage TAC to:

1. Publish an online manual of best practices for county election websites, including templates related to voter information topics.

2. Encourage member counties to use the Texas Secretary of State voting educational materials found at www.VoteTexas.gov/resources/voter-id-education-materials/, including materials related to military and overseas voters, voter ID, and other informational pamphlets.

Sampling of Texas County Elections Websites

Powered by Civic Plus

www.civicplus.com

Hood County

Population estimate, 2015:	55,423
Elections administrator:	Jenise Miller
Website:	http://co.hood.tx.us/index.aspx?nid=222
Overall adequacy score:	4-Very good
Reviewer comments:	Comprehensive information but lacking Spanish language. Left-hand menu provides local information for voters and candidates while right-hand menu provides links to state elections sites and political parties.

Powered by Revise

www.revize.com

Bell County

Population estimate, 2015:	334,941
Elections administrator:	Shawn Snyder
Website:	www.bellcountytx.com/departments/elections/
Overall adequacy score:	3-Good
Reviewer comments:	Excellent website readability. Comprehensive election information except lacks voter ID information and Spanish language.

Powered by Viva+Impulse Creative Co.

http://vivaimpulse.com

El Paso County

Population estimate, 2015:	835,593
Elections administrator:	Lisa Wise
Website:	https://epcountyvotes.com
Overall adequacy score:	4-Very good
Reviewer comments:	Superior website readability. Comprehensive election information. Voter ID information needs updating. Each subpage available in Spanish.

Grimes County

Population estimate, 2015:	27,512
Elections administrator:	Rebecca Duff
Website:	www.co.grimes.tx.us/default.aspx?Grimes_County/Elections
Overall adequacy score:	5-Perfect
Reviewer comments:	Winner of the Hometown Spirit Award! Fun graphics!

CIRA-Hosted; Powered by ezTask

CIRA = County Information Resources Agency
www.cira.state.tx.us/
Powered by ezTask
www.eztask.com

Dewitt County

Population estimate, 2015:	20,797
Elections administrator:	Blanca McBride
Website:	www.co.dewitt.tx.us/default.aspx?Dewitt_County/Elections
Overall adequacy score:	5-Perfect
Reviewer comments:	Simple, clear, easy to find information. A one-page menu with links to essential election and voter ID information with additional links to local governments and election-related websites. (ezTask Template 1)

Chambers County

Population estimate, 2015:	38,863
Elections administrator:	Heather Hawthorne
Website:	www.co.chambers.tx.us/default.aspx?name=elections
Overall adequacy score:	4-Very good
Reviewer comments:	Simple, clear, easy to find information. A one-page menu with links and icons to election and voter ID information. However, lacks deadline dates and current voter ID information. (ezTask Template 2)

Young County

Population estimate, 2015:	18,270
Elections administrator:	Lauren Sullivan
Website:	www.co.young.tx.us/default.aspx?Young_County/Elections
Overall adequacy score:	3-Good
Reviewer comments:	While information on the elections subpage is minimal, a link to an elections/voter registration Facebook page provides an innovative way to communicate the information to county voters.

Powered by Scytl

www.scytl.com/en/
Visual design and landscape is individualized for each county elections website.

Bastrop County

Population estimate, 2015:	80,527
Elections administrator:	Bridgette Escobeto
Website:	www.bastropvotes.org
Overall adequacy score:	5-Perfect
Reviewer comments:	Access to Spanish language election information provided by telephone.

Denton County

Population estimate, 2015:	780,612
Elections administrator:	Lannie Noble
Website:	www.votedenton.com
Overall adequacy score:	5-Perfect
Reviewer comments:	**Español** Clicking the icon at the top of the home page translates the entire website into Spanish.

Jefferson County

Population estimate, 2015:	254,308
Elections administrator:	Carolyn Guidry
Website:	www.jeffersonelections.com
Overall adequacy score:	5-Perfect
Reviewer comments:	Deadline for voter registration was found on county home page www.co.jefferson.tx.us. But on the elections website, the deadlines are buried on subpages and behind a dot on the event calendar, thus very difficult to find.

Potter County

Population estimate, 2015:	121,802
Elections administrator:	Melyn Huntley
Website:	http://pottercountyvotes.com
Overall adequacy score:	4-Very good
Reviewer comments:	The Potter County website www.co.potter.tx.us is provided by CIRA and uses the traditional CIRA template menus. The link to "Voting" under the "Services for Residents" Quicklinks menu takes the visitor the separate elections website. Lacked Spanish language translation.

Independently Built Websites

Brazos County

Population estimate, 2015:	215,037
Elections administrator:	Trudy Handcock
Website:	www.brazosvotes.org
Overall adequacy score:	5-Perfect
Reviewer comments:	Excellent FAQs section. Valuable links to SOS, military & overseas voter information, LWV, and political parties may be missed as "Links" at top of home page is easily overlooked.

Comal County

Population estimate, 2015:	129,048
Elections administrator:	Cynthia Jaqua
Website:	www.co.comal.tx.us/Elections.htm
Overall adequacy score:	4-Very good
Reviewer comments:	Excellent Quicklinks menu. Everything but Spanish language.

Dallas County

Population estimate, 2015:	2,553,385
Elections administrator:	Toni Pippins-Poole
Website:	www.dallascountyvotes.org
Overall adequacy score:	5-Perfect
Reviewer comments:	Enhanced by fun photos, interactive map, and use of Upcoming Events space connected to Event Calendar. Facebook page used to post events.

Hays County

Population estimate, 2015:	194,739
Elections administrator:	Joyce A Cowan
Website:	www.co.hays.tx.us/elections.aspx
Overall adequacy score:	5-Perfect
Reviewer comments:	Engaging language on elections page to invite visitor to vote, register to vote, and be a poll worker. Excellent FAQs, e.g., "If I am in college, should I register in my hometown or in my college town?"

Travis County

Population estimate, 2015:	1,176,558
Elections administrator:	Dana DeBeauvoir
Website:	www.traviscountyclerk.org/eclerk/Content.do?code=E.0
Overall adequacy score:	5-Perfect
Reviewer comments:	High information level but low website readability level−busy, overpowering legibility; complex wording and sentence structure; and difficult to understand.

Excellence Awards

Outstanding

33 (14%) of 234county elections websites earned an overall score of 5-Perfect

Aransas County	www.aransascountytx.gov/electionadmin/
Bastrop County	www.bastropvotes.org/
Bexar County	www.bexar.org/1568/Elections-Department/
Brazos County	www.brazosvotes.org
Caldwell County	www.co.caldwell.tx.us/default.aspx?Caldwell_County/ElectionInformation
Cameron County	www.co.cameron.tx.us/administration/elections_voter_registration/
Comal County	www.co.comal.tx.us/Elections.htm
Dallas County	www.dallascountyvotes.org
Denton County	www.votedenton.com
DeWitt County	www.co.dewitt.tx.us/default.aspx?Dewitt_County/Elections
Ellis County	http://co.ellis.tx.us/index.aspx?nid=312
Fort Bend County	www.fortbendcountytx.gov/index.aspx?page=338
Gregg County	www.greggcountyvotes.com
Grimes County	www.co.grimes.tx.us/default.aspx?Grimes_County/Elections
Guadalupe County	www.co.guadalupe.tx.us/elections/

Harris County	www.harrisvotes.com
Harrison County	http://harrisoncountytexas.org/elections
Hays County	www.co.hays.tx.us/elections.aspx
Jefferson County	www.jeffersonelections.com
Kendall County	www.co.kendall.tx.us/default.aspx?Kendall_County/Elections
Kleberg County	www.co.kleberg.tx.us/default.aspx?Kleberg_County/Elections
Lubbock County	www.votelubbock.org/election-information/
McLennan County	www.mcmullencounty.org/elections/
Montgomery County	www.mctx.org/election/
Nueces County	www.co.nueces.tx.us/countyclerk/elections/
Refugio County	www.co.refugio.tx.us/default.aspx?Refugio_County/Elections
Travis County	www.traviscountyclerk.org/eclerk/Content.do?code=E.0
Val Verde County	www.valverdecounty.texas.gov/270/Elections
Victoria County	www.victoriacountytx.org/index.php/en/county-departments?id=103
Waller County	www.co.waller.tx.us/page/Elections
Webb County	www.webbcountytx.gov/ElectionsAdministration/
Williamson County	www.wilco.org/CountyDepartments/Elections/tabid/450/Default.aspx
Wise County	www.co.wise.tx.us (Link to elections page on home page)

Honorable Mention

66 (42%) of 234 county elections websites earned an overall score of 4-Very good

Bandera County	www.banderacounty.org/departments/ElectionAdministrator.htm
Brazoria County	www.brazoriacountyclerk.net/recorder/content/Elections/HomePage.htm
Brewster County	www.brewstercountytx.com/vote/
Brown County	www.browncountytx.org/default.aspx?Brown_County/Elections
Burnet County	www.burnetcountytexas.org/default.aspx?name=elect.home
Calhoun County	www.calhouncotx.org/electinfo.html
Chambers County	www.co.chambers.tx.us/default.aspx?name=elections
Cochran County	www.co.cochran.tx.us/default.aspx?Cochran_County/Elections
Coleman County	www.co.coleman.tx.us/default.aspx?Coleman_County/Elections
Collin County	www.collincountytx.gov/elections/Pages/default.aspx
Cooke County	http://tools.cira.state.tx.us/default.aspx?Cooke_County/Elections
Crane County	www.co.crane.tx.us/default.aspx?Crane_County/Elections
Ector County	www.co.ector.tx.us/default.aspx?Ector_County/Elections
El Paso County	https://epcountyvotes.com
Erath County	http://co.erath.tx.us/votinginfo.html
Falls County	www.co.falls.tx.us/default.aspx?Falls_County/Elections
Fayette County	www.co.fayette.tx.us/default.aspx?Fayette_County/Elections
Frio County	www.co.frio.tx.us/default.aspx?Frio_County/Elections
Gaines County	www.co.gaines.tx.us/default.aspx?Gaines_County/Elections
Garza County	www.garzacounty.net/id36.html
Gillespie County	www.gillespiecounty.org/page/election_info
Glasscock County	www.co.glasscock.tx.us/default.aspx?Glasscock_County/Elections
Grayson County	www.co.grayson.tx.us/default.aspx?name=elec.home

County	Website
Henderson County	www.henderson-county.com/departments/voter-registration
Hidalgo County	https://tx-hidalgocounty.civicplus.com/index.aspx?nid=105
Hill County	www.co.hill.tx.us/default.aspx?Hill_County/Elections
Hood County	www.co.hood.tx.us/index.aspx?NID=222
Hutchinson County	www.co.hutchinson.tx.us/default.aspx?Hutchinson_County/ElectionInformation
Jackson County	www.co.jackson.tx.us/default.aspx?Jackson_County/VotingElectionInformation
Jim Wells County	www.co.jim-wells.tx.us/default.aspx?name=co.elections.administration
Johnson County	www.johnsoncountytx.org/departments/elections-office
Karnes County	www.co.karnes.tx.us/default.aspx?Karnes_County/Elections
Kaufman County	www.kaufmancounty.net/elc.html
Kerr County	www.co.kerr.tx.us/elections/
Lampasas County	www.co.lampasas.tx.us/default.aspx?Lampasas_County/Elections
Lavaca County	www.co.lavaca.tx.us/default.aspx?Lavaca_County/Elections
Lee County	www.co.lee.tx.us/default.aspx?Lee_County/Elections
Limestone County	www.co.limestone.tx.us/default.aspx?Limestone_County/Elections
Live-Oak County	www.co.live-oak.tx.us/default.aspx?Live-Oak_County/County.Clerk
Madison County	www.co.madison.tx.us/default.aspx?Madison_County/Elections
McMullen County	www.mcmullencounty.org/elections/
Medina County	www.medinacountytexas.org/default.aspx?Medina_County/Elections
Midland County	www.co.midland.tx.us/departments/elections/Pages/default.aspx
Moore County	www.co.moore.tx.us/default.aspx?Moore_County/Elections
Nacogdoches County	www.co.nacogdoches.tx.us/ElectionInformation/Index.asp
Palo-Pinto County	http://palopintocounty.net:8080/wp/?page_id=6
Parmer County	http://parmercounty.org/county-courts/county-clerk/voting-information/
Potter County	http://pottercountyvotes.com
Runnels County	www.co.runnels.tx.us/default.aspx?Runnels_County/Elections
San Jacinto County	www.co.san-jacinto.tx.us/default.aspx?San-Jacinto_County/Elections
San Patricio County	www.co.san-patricio.tx.us/default.aspx?San-Patricio_County/Elections
San Saba County	www.co.san-saba.tx.us/default.aspx?San-Saba_County/Elections
Scurry County	www.co.scurry.tx.us/default.aspx?Scurry_County/Elections
Smith County	www.smith-county.com/Government/Departments/Elections/Default.aspx
Somervell County	www.co.somervell.tx.us/elections
Tarrant County	www.tarrantcounty.com/en/elections.html?linklocation=supermenu&linkname=Elections
Taylor County	www.taylorcountytexas.org/212/Elections
Terry County	www.co.terry.tx.us/default.aspx?Terry_County/Elections
Tom Green County	www.co.tom-green.tx.us/default.aspx?name=ele.ElectionsHome
Tyler County	www.co.tyler.tx.us/default.aspx?Tyler_County/ElectionInformation
Walker County	www.co.walker.tx.us/department/division.php?fDD=25-113
Washington County	www.co.washington.tx.us/default.aspx?Washington_County/Elections
Wharton County	www.co.wharton.tx.us/default.aspx?Wharton_County/Elections
Willacy County	www.co.willacy.tx.us/default.aspx?Willacy_County/Elections
Yoakum County	www.co.yoakum.tx.us/default.aspx?Yoakum_County/Elections
Zapata County	www.co.zapata.tx.us/default.aspx?Zapata_County/Elections

Measure of Progress

Fifty-two percent (121) of the 202 county websites that provide elections information improved their overall score of adequacy in provision of election and voter ID information between August and October. Table 9 indicates the progress made by individual counties among those to be commended for excellence in providing elections information to their communities.

Table 9. Progress in Mean Adequacy Score Among the Top 99 Official County Websites That Provide Election Information, Texas, October 2016

Outstanding (33)		Honorable Mention (66)		
Mean Score of 5 (Perfect)		Mean Score of 4 (Very Good)		
Aransas[1]	Harrison[1]	Bandera[4]	Grayson[4]	Nacogdoches[5]
Bastrop[2]	Hays[2]	Brazoria[4]	Henderson[4]	Palo-Pinto[4]
Bexar[2]	Jefferson[2]	Brewster[4]	Hidalgo[5]	Parmer[4]
Brazos[2]	Kendall[1]	Brown[4]	Hill[4]	Potter[5]
Caldwell[3]	Kleberg[1]	Burnet[5]	Hood[5]	Runnels[4]
Cameron[3]	Lubbock[2]	Calhoun[4]	Hutchinson[4]	San Jacinto[5]
Comal[3]	McLennan[3]	Chambers[5]	Jackson[5]	San Patricio[5]
Dallas[2]	Montgomery[1]	Cochran[4]	Jim Wells[4]	San Saba[4]
Denton[2]	Nueces[1]	Coleman[4]	Johnson[4]	Scurry[4]
DeWitt[2]	Refugio[2]	Collin[4]	Karnes[1]	Smith[5]
Ellis[3]	Travis[2]	Cooke[4]	Kaufman[4]	Somervell[4]
Fort Bend[3]	Val Verde[1]	Crane[4]	Kerr[5]	Tarrant[4]
Gregg[2]	Victoria[3]	Ector[5]	Lampasas[4]	Taylor[5]
Grimes[2]	Waller[2]	El Paso[5]	Lavaca[4]	Terry[5]
Guadalupe[1]	Webb[1]	Erath[5]	Lee[5]	Tom Green[4]
Harris[1]	Williamson[2]	Falls[4]	Limestone[5]	Tyler[4]
	Wise[1]	Fayette[5]	Live-Oak[4]	Walker[4]
		Frio[4]	Madison[4]	Washington[4]
		Gaines[4]	McMullen[4]	Wharton[5]
		Garza[4]	Medina[4]	Willacy[4]
		Gillespie[4]	Midland[5]	Yoakum[4]
		Glasscock[4]	Moore[4]	Zapata[4]

[1]Increased mean score to 5 from 3 or lower (11 county websites).
[2]Maintained mean score of 5 (15 county websites).
[3]Increased mean score from 4 to 5 (7 county websites).
[4]Increased mean score from to 4 from 3 or lower (44 county websites).
[5]Maintained mean score of 4 (22 county websites).