

Advanced Voting Solutions in the News – A Partial List of Documented Failures

Date	Machine	Place/Description								
???		Shoup changes its name to Advanced Voting Solutions. ¹								
June 2001	(Company)	Howard T. Van Pelt, co-founder of Global Election Systems (now Diebold) became president and CEO of Advanced Voting Solutions.								
October 2003	WINvote	<p>Arlington, Virginia. The Electoral Board published a troubleshooting document before the election, describing potential problems and explaining what to do.² Portions are reproduced below:</p>								
		<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="619 441 1171 493">Problem</th> <th data-bbox="1171 441 1793 493">What to do</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="619 493 1171 665">Voting machine freezes during boot-up</td> <td data-bbox="1171 493 1793 665">Try rebooting by pressing the red power button and holding it until the screen goes blank. Wait about 15 seconds, and press the button again to re-start. If the reboot doesn't work, open all other machines and call the office at 703-228-3456.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="619 665 1171 1052">Master unit does not "pick up" one of the units in the polling place when opening the polls - the serial number of one of the units does not appear.</td> <td data-bbox="1171 665 1793 1052"> <p>Touch "Stop Searching," and then touch "Search Units" to try again.</p> <p>If the missing machine still doesn't appear: Touch "Stop Searching," then "Open Location" to open all the other machines. After the other machines are open, insert the LOCATION card in the missing unit, and open the one machine individually.</p> <p>If the LOCATION card doesn't open the problem machine, call the office at 703-228-3456.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="619 1052 1171 1185">When closing the polls, the tally fails to pick up a machine (the machine serial number doesn't appear on the tally screen with a check mark).</td> <td data-bbox="1171 1052 1793 1185">Call the office at 703-228-3456.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Problem	What to do	Voting machine freezes during boot-up	Try rebooting by pressing the red power button and holding it until the screen goes blank. Wait about 15 seconds, and press the button again to re-start. If the reboot doesn't work, open all other machines and call the office at 703-228-3456.	Master unit does not "pick up" one of the units in the polling place when opening the polls - the serial number of one of the units does not appear.	<p>Touch "Stop Searching," and then touch "Search Units" to try again.</p> <p>If the missing machine still doesn't appear: Touch "Stop Searching," then "Open Location" to open all the other machines. After the other machines are open, insert the LOCATION card in the missing unit, and open the one machine individually.</p> <p>If the LOCATION card doesn't open the problem machine, call the office at 703-228-3456.</p>	When closing the polls, the tally fails to pick up a machine (the machine serial number doesn't appear on the tally screen with a check mark).	Call the office at 703-228-3456.
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¹ http://clients.enfocom.com/avs/investors_release001.html

² **WINvote Troubleshooting Tips.** Published by the Arlington Virginia Electoral Board. October, 2003.
<https://www.co.arlington.va.us/voters/EO/images/WINvoteTroubleshootingTips.pdf>

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November 2003	WINVote (paperless voting machine)	<p>Hinds County, Mississippi. Voting computers at some polling places in District 29 failed to start up. Others overheated and broke down during the election, and not enough paper ballots were available to allow all voters to vote. ³</p> <p>When she [Elise Turner] arrived at her polling place at Belhaven College, the voting machines were down and there were no paper ballots.</p> <p>"I was told I could leave and come back, but I waited for the ballots," Turner said. "Some people left."</p> <p>When she got a ballot, Turner had to use a pen from a poll worker's purse and sit in a chair with people close enough to look at her votes on the ballot.</p> <p>"This is just not acceptable," Turner said. "You would think they would know any electronic device can fail and would have had paper ballots and a box of No. 2 pencils from Office Depot."</p> <p>The Mississippi Senate decided it was impossible to determine the will of the voters. So it declared the election invalid, and a new election was held on February 10, 2004. ⁴</p> <p>The discussion primarily focused on whether a revote should be held in the whole 22-precinct district or be limited to the one precinct where most of the problems occurred.</p> <p>... It was not fair, however, for Democrats to push to throw out votes in one precinct when there were reports of irregularities at eight other precincts, she said.</p>

³ **Long lines, machine malfunctions mark today's voting.** November 4, 2003; By Clay Harden. <http://www.clarionledger.com/news/0311/04/mvproblems.html>

⁴ **District vote set; contender may quit: Democrat says he's "been through enough" in disputed Senate race.** Clarion Ledger; January 21, 2004 ; By Julie Goodman. <http://www.clarionledger.com/news/0401/21/ma04.html>

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Date	Machine	Place/Description
November 2003	WINVote	<p>Fairfax County, Virginia. A post-election report by the Fairfax GOP committee called the election a "technological and procedural failure." The report further states:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The WINvote machines failed. The software failed (machines crashed throughout, voters reported difficulty in getting their choices to record), the hardware failed (some machines required new batteries, some needed to be "jiggled" back into operation, modems failed to transmit data) ... the sheer volume of problems and unresolved questions after Election Day, 2003 is mind-boggling; especially in a community where, in the past, such problems were few and far between.⁵</p> <p>Examples of problems reported:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Two of the Hunters Woods machines did not work when turned on in the morning.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">I pressed a name I did not want to vote for intending to try the change your vote feature. The machine accepted my vote. I read the instructions on how to change it ... "press the spot again." So I pressed again. No change. Again, no change. ... Eventually, I hit the right combination of time and pressure, and the erroneous vote was removed, leaving me free to make a correct vote.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">In Villages the count came up one vote short. The election officials said that a woman pressed, "vote," said thank you and left, whereupon the official discovered the machine had died. It was the second time that particular machine died, and at that point it was taken out of service. The rest of the votes registered but that one did not.</p> <p>These comments are from an Assistant Chief at one precinct:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">One machine "froze" after accepting 4 votes, was rebooted about 1PM, accepted 2 more votes and then froze again. We were told to take it out of service for the rest of the day. The tech rep that was sent to look at the machine did not physically remove it. He did bring another machine for us to use- it would not work either.</p>

⁵ **Operation Ballot Integrity.** A Report by Fairfax County Republican Committee. January, 2004. http://www.fairfaxco-gop.org/download/ballot_integrity.pdf

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November 2003	WINVote	<p>Fairfax County, Virginia. (continued from previous page)</p> <p>We had many problems with people complaining that their votes were not "staying lit" after they pressed them.</p> <p>I also found that the summary page at the end of the ballot confused voters. The ballot issues were in large bold type, and the person's choices were in a much smaller type, often not noticed by the voter. I heard people say that they were at the summary page and the machine had "lost" all their choices. In some of those cases, the voter simply couldn't read the screen well. In other cases, they claimed they had selected things that were not on the summary page, and I would help them walk back through the ballot screens to correct what they were calling "errors."</p> <p>... the modem upload of data at the end of the day simply did not work. The system was supposed to allow the election officers to gather the data from all machines and upload it to the electoral board over a phone line. After trying for more than 30 minutes to transfer the data, the chief and I finally decided to tally manually and call the data in (how it's "always" been done before).</p> <p>Margaret K. Luca, secretary of the county Board of Elections, disputed the GOP committee's report, calling it inaccurate. "It was about as good as an Election Day as we've ever had," Luca said. Her staff "bent over backwards" to prepare for the election and held numerous demonstrations and seminars for the public beforehand. ... She said that every technical problem cited in the report was fixed in the weeks after the election. ⁶</p>

⁶ **Fairfax Voting Machines A 'Failure'. GOP Says County Was Unprepared, Urges State Control.** Washington Post, January 10, 2004. By David Cho.
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A4790-2004Jan9.html>

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September 2004	Marksense	<p>Columbia County, Wisconsin. Two central-count optical scan machines fail just before the primary election.⁷</p> <p>Columbia County Clerk Jeanne Miller said ballots in next week's primary election may be counted by hand if kinks aren't worked out of the county's voting machines by today. ...</p> <p>They were "a little touchy" in April's elections, forcing the county to purchase new parts, Miller said. Since then, problems have compounded. Ballots have come out with roller marks, write-in votes are not being read and ballots have jammed, among other issues.</p> <p>The county spends about \$5,000 a year for voting machine maintenance. Miller has been in constant contact with a technician in Texas, telling him the problems and trying different solutions. If things "get desperate," she may request that he travel to Portage to look at the machines.</p> <p>Miller said many problems may be software-related, rather than with the machines themselves. In that case, the maintenance company may not be able to help.</p>
May 2005	WINVote	<p>Hinds County, Mississippi. Batteries failed early in the election, taking down the machines.⁸</p> <p>Things started smoothly at 7 a.m. at Jackson's Ward 1 Precinct 36 at McLeod Elementary, but a few minutes after voting started touch-screen machines started going down. Within minutes all four were down.</p> <p>The problem, school officials said later, was a bank of electrical outlets needed to be turned on with a switch. The voting machines were operating on battery power, and the machines went down as the batteries ran down.</p> <p>A similar problem occurred in a handful of other Jackson precincts, with power strips not being turned on, said Hinds County Elections Commissioner Marilyn Avery." It was not anything of any magnitude," she said.</p> <p>VotersUnite! wonders what "paper report" would be legal for technicians to print before the election was closed.</p> <p>Before they left, technicians checked the machines to ensure no votes had been lost due to electrical problems. They obtained a paper report from the machine just to be safe, [precinct manager Caroline] Sanders said.</p>

⁷ **Ballots jam county voting system.** Capital Newspapers Portage Daily Register. September 8, 2004. By Jesse Hirsch.
<http://portage.scwn.com/articles/2004/09/08/news/news1.txt>

⁸ **Pearl turnout reported low; problems mar voting in Jackson's Precinct 36.** The Clarion-Ledger. May 3, 2005. By Cathy Hayden.
<http://www.clarionledger.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050503/NEWS0103/50503011>