

Online voter registration to begin in Nevada this spring

By Sean Whaley, Nevada News Bureau

CARSON CITY – For the first time, Washoe County voters will be able to register and make changes to their current voter registration online.

Beginning in mid-April, the Washoe County Registrar of Voters office, working in collaboration with the Nevada Secretary of State's office, will make the switch to Nevada Online Voter Access; allowing citizens to go directly online and register to vote or update their current information.

During a presentation to the Washoe County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday, Registrar Dan Burk said the switch over to NOVA registration will not only be easier for citizens, but also cost effective, and will ensure the integrity and security of voter registration, requiring a match for the last four digits of the Social Security number as well as the Nevada DMV identification before the online process can be completed.

"Although voters will still have the same cut-off date to register, the good thing is now, instead of going to the DMV, Registrar's office, or picking up paperwork and sending in back to us, citizens will soon be able to do this online," Burk said. "It's a huge leap forward."

Voters using the online system will also be able to confirm that they are registered and be able to download their sample ballot by going online and selecting the "Am I Registered?" button on the webpage. The list of districts, as well as a map of each precinct is also available through the "Precincts and Districts" box.

The initial funding for NOVA registration in Washoe County was paid for by \$86,000 in federal funding provided through the Help America Vote Act.

Washoe and Clark will be the first two counties in the state offering online voter registration, but the system will soon be expanded to all counties in Nevada. Currently, there are more than 215,200 registered voters in Washoe County's 643 precincts. With a total population of approximately 420,000, Washoe County, with a 67 percent registration base is substantially higher than most jurisdictions in the United States.

"Online voter registration has the potential to have direct savings to the taxpayers," Burk said. "In the future, it will allow us to hire fewer temporary workers to input all of the data, since people will be registering themselves online."