

By Carolyn Lee

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To prepare for the Nov. 2 general election, Secretary of State John Gale urges qualified Nebraska citizens to register to vote if they haven't done so.

The National Association of Secretaries of State has designated September as National Voter Registration Month.

Registration applications are available on the Secretary of State web site, www.sos.ne.gov, or at the Chase County Clerk's office in the courthouse.

County Clerk Debbie Clark said Oct. 15 is the deadline for mailed in registrations.

"This allows us to enter them into the voter registration system and verify the address by mailing a voter registration card to the voter," she said.

If a voter application is mailed in, the voter will need to produce a proof of identification, such as a driver's license, at the polls, she said.

The deadline for registering to vote in person at the clerk's office is Oct. 22 at 6 p.m. "This allows the counties to have all voters entered into the system prior to running the poll books for use on election day," Clark noted.

When registering to vote in person, Clark said the applicant should produce a Nebraska driver's license number or, if they do not have a Nebraska driver's license, the last four digits of their social security number.

"The voter registration system provides the ability to match this information with the Department of Motor Vehicles before confirming the registration," Clark stated.

People who have moved from one county to another county need to reregister to vote.

In addition, people who have moved within the same county should update their registration. Updating the registration will avoid delays at the polling site due to additional paperwork.

Early voting ballots

July 4 was the first day the clerk's office accepted early voting ballot requests for the General Election. Ballots should be ready by Sept. 27 for those wishing to vote early at the courthouse.

Oct. 27 is the last day to have early ballots mailed out to a voter, Clark said, with Nov. 1 being the last day to vote in person early at the clerk's office.

The General Election is Nov. 2.

"Voting on a regular basis is part of being a good citizen," Gale noted. "The U.S. system of representative democracy works best when we have at least a majority of voters turning out at all elections."