

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

More candidate signs are showing up and the political advertising is increasing.

The 2012 General Election is less than three weeks away, and voting has become the topic of conversation here and across the country.

As of early afternoon Tuesday, the Chase County Clerk's Office reports that 116 voters have already cast their General Election ballots.

And, Teri Beard who works at the county clerk's office said she still had a stack on her desk to get entered into the system.

That's an average of about 10 early voters a day since that option became available in Chase County Oct. 1.

Beard has no idea why so many have voted this early, but said possibly it's because many voters already have their minds made up.

Whatever the reason, it's keeping her busy.

That early voting rush is being seen throughout the state, according to Secretary of State John Gale. He said county election offices across Nebraska are getting a lot of requests for early ballots.

"A surge in early voting signals a probable high turnout for our Nov. 6 election," Gale said.

"While convenience is a factor, early voting shows people have been paying attention and are ready to vote," he added.

There are some deadlines early voters need to know.

Registered voters can make requests until 4 p.m. on Oct. 31 for early voting ballots to be mailed.

Nov. 5 is the deadline for early voting in-person at the Clerk's Office.

The close of polls on Nov. 6 is the deadline for the return of early voting ballots to county election offices, including ballots returned by mail.

Requests for the early voting ballots can be made directly on the Secretary of State's website: www.sos.state.ne.gov. Look under "elections" and click on "voter forms."

Beard in the Chase County Clerk's office said she has been fielding a number of calls from college students who are away and want to vote.

Voter registration deadlines

There are a number of other deadlines approaching quickly for people who want to register to vote for the first time, or make changes to their current registrations.

An update to the registration is required if a voter has moved within a county or changed their name.

In-person voter registration can be completed at the county clerk's office until 6 p.m. MT on Friday, Oct. 26.

Those who want to mail in a voter registration form must have it postmarked by Oct. 19. Those forms are also available on the Secretary of State's website.

Einspahr files as write-in

Rick K. Einspahr filed a write-in affidavit Monday with the county clerk's office for the Village of Wauneta Board race.

County Clerk Debbie Clark said the affidavit was not required, but by filing it, the name voters write in on the ballot will not have to be the exact spelling.

“If we can tell that Rick was their intention, we can count the vote,” she said.
Prior to his filing as a write-in, the Wauneta board race had just one other candidate, incumbent Lloyd Sinner, for two open seats.