

Hand Counting Delivers Election Day or Same Day Results

By Linda Rantz, Author, *Missouri Elections: Return to Hand Counting*

The Myth: Hand Counting Takes Too Long

A common objection to hand counting is that it delays results — some claim it takes days or weeks. In 2022, a St. Louis County election official suggested it could take months, offering no evidence. This myth ignores real-world data showing hand counting can deliver results on election day (or same day, if counting starts after polls close).

Finding: 50–100 Ballots Per Hour Per Team

The “Missouri Method” proves hand counting is efficient:

- **Tested Speed:** For multi-race ballots, teams of 4 count 50–100 ballots per hour, depending on ballot length (2 seconds per tally, including reviews).
- **Real-World Proof:** In Osage County’s 2023 municipal election, Westphalia’s team counted 481 ballots in 5 hours — averaging 100 ballots per hour — despite delays from unformatted ballots. Other polling places reported similar times.

Plan with the Hand Count Estimator Tool

The Hand Count Estimator Tool helps clerks project counting times and staffing needs using historical turnout data. Input variables like ballots per hour and team size, and it calculates labor costs and team requirements to ensure election day results. It’s simple math for any jurisdiction.

[Action for Elected Officials](#)

Hand counting delivers timely results — 50 to 100 ballots per hour. Use the Estimator Tool to plan efficient elections in your county, ensuring transparency without delays. For details, including Osage County’s 2023 results, scan the QR code, visit the hand count [website](#), or email ContactUs@ReturntoHandCounting.com.

