

File a Formal Complaint - Rhett Winter

When I requested a ballot the documentation said something like "my personal information would be used for official voting business only." My information was given to a political campaign and I received an advertisement promoting the incumbent supervisor.

Now the WCD is having to waste time and public money dealing with this breach of privacy that is costing tax payer dollars. It is not clear to me if the email I received from Ayers constitutes the advertisement to sell any services based on the peripheral components. Thank you for keeping our elections fair and open.

Helm4ConservationDistrict

Bruce Ayers <bruce@bruceayers.com>

Wed 2/21/2018 2:44 PM

To: rettro96@msn.com <rettro96@msn.com>;

Place pre-header text or [link](#) here.



Please MAIL-IN-YOUR-BALLOT before Tuesday,
March 13th or
VOTE in Person on Tuesday, March 13th
at
the Whatcom Conservation District Office
6975 Hannegan Road, Lynden
9:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Hi, my name is LARRY HELM and I'm running for re-election for the Whatcom Conservation District. I am the only practicing farmer presently serving on the Whatcom Conservation District Board of Supervisors.

The Conservation District was created decades ago to help our Local Farming Community--and as an active farmer I understand the concerns and issues that our Local Farms are facing. If re-elected I will continue to represent and fight for our Local Farms and AG Industry.

FOLLOW US

<https://www.facebook.com/LarryHelm4ConservationDistrict/?rc=p>

[Manage Your Subscription](#)

This message was sent to **rettro96@msn.com** from **bruce@bruceayers.com**

Bruce Ayers

1313 E. Maple St. #201
BELLINGHAM , WA 98225



Whatcom CD Election - Use of your email address in 3rd party campaign mailing

WCD <WCD@whatcomcd.org>

Thu 2/22/2018 4:47 PM

To: WCD <WCD@whatcomcd.org>;

February 22, 2018

Dear Whatcom County Voter:

It has come to my attention that a third party may have sent you a campaign message regarding our Board of Supervisors election using the information you provided when requesting a mail-in ballot. Please accept my sincere apology that this has happened. In setting up the mail-in ballot request system, the intention was to create a pathway that would provide more access to voting in the District elections within our limited financial resources. I did not anticipate that the information gathered would be publicly requested and used in this way, violating our promise of confidentiality to you. If I did, it would have been made clear to you before you shared your email address and phone number.

Email addresses were requested as a way to acknowledge that your ballot request was received. It was also used to notify you that the ballots had been mailed and the timeframe in which to return them. Again, the intention was to provide the best customer service and ensure access to the election process for all.

As a government agency, the District is subject to the provisions of the State of Washington Public Records Act. A request under this Act was made for our mail-in ballot request list, including email addresses. Prior to granting the request, I consulted the Washington State Conservation Commission ("WSCC") for guidance, who develops guidance and makes regulations for conservation district elections. The reply I received essentially said that the District had to provide all the information requested because it was not exempt from disclosure under the laws that govern the supervisor election. The decision to provide this list to Bruce Ayers Consulting was in accordance with the election laws. The Conservation District has no political affiliations and the election is non-partisan, therefore the action of these groups does not reflect the views of this agency.

It is also good to point out, that while this information could be used for "political purpose" it "shall not be used for the purpose of mailing or delivering any advertisement or offer for any property, establishment, organization, product, or service or for the purpose of mailing or delivering any solicitation for money, services, or anything of value". RCW29A.08.720.

I must also share with you that I have received one additional public records requests. So, you are likely to be receiving more election related messages from third party sources. Let me apologize in advance for any further unwanted campaign emails you may receive from these entities. Though there does not appear to be anything that can be done to prevent what is happening this year, moving forward, the following steps will be taken:

- Ø I am sending this apology and explanation to all that requested a mail-in ballot and have posted on our Facebook page with a request that folks send their comments to wcd@whatcomcd.org. These will be compiled into a report for the WCD Board of Supervisors regarding the conduct of the election and recommendations for the future.
- Ø The Washington State Conservation Commission will also be notified as to the events that have transpired. The Commission will review the conduct of the election. WSCC has the authority to take appropriate action at a state level. See <http://scc.wa.gov/elections-and-appointments/>
- Ø The procedures and processes will be reviewed to see what steps can be taken to avoid capturing personal

information such as email address and phone numbers in the future without compromising the accessibility and accuracy of the voting process.

Again, I sincerely apologize for the inconvenience and my failure to anticipate and prevent this from happening. Please call or email me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely

George J. Boggs, JD
Executive Director
Whatcom Conservation District
[6975 Hannegan Road](#)
[Lynden, WA 98264](#)
P (360)526-2381 x 115 C (360)815-5342
GBoggs@whatcomcd.org