

**Untitled**

Commission Meeting

**Name**

Alexandria Piland

**Address**

2221 Green Lake Road  
Rio Rancho, NM 87124  
United States  
[Map It](#)

**Email**

[alexpiland@msn.com](mailto:alexpiland@msn.com)

**Comments:**

RUMOR vs. REALITY: Are New Mexico's vote counting machines ever connected to the Internet?

No. New Mexico utilizes air-gapped counting systems, which means that our vote tabulators are prevented by law and process from being joined to a computer network or the Internet.

It has become a popular point of disinformation to suggest that New Mexico's vote tabulators are compromised because they are connected to the Internet. Our air-gapped counting systems ensure that vote tabulators are never connected to the Internet.

Why is this important? Air-gapping is a best practice in election administration that helps prevent hacking of voter data and/or election results. The physical separation of systems ensured by air-gapping makes it much more difficult for any bad actor to try and penetrate those systems.

Because hackers could try and use other means to manipulate votes, we also have further safeguards in place to ensure the integrity of our votes.

Perhaps the most important one that pairs with air-gapping is our use of paper ballots. Every election in New Mexico uses one-hundred percent paper ballots. Using all paper ballots in every election allows for auditing and verification of automated vote counting systems because there is always a paper trail. That means that even if by some means a nefarious actor was able to penetrate one of our systems, we always have a physical backup of paper ballots that can be referred to in order to achieve the accurate result.