

## **Hot August, Not-So-Hot Primary?**

### **Local News**

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SEATTLE - The primary election is coming up next week here in Washington, and even the convenience of mail-in ballots in 38 counties is not expected to improve the turnout, which is projected at only 30 percent.

Since it's not a national election year, the August 18 primary is mostly local, for mayors, city and county officials and some judges. If you think there aren't enough important reasons to cast a ballot, says Aaron Ostrom, executive director of the progressive voters' group *Fuse Washington* - think again.

"If people care about transportation or development and smart growth; about property taxes, about public health or public safety; about parks or libraries, they need to vote in this election. Because these are the folks who are going to be making those decisions."

Some of the hottest races are in King County, including Seattle's seven-way race for County Executive as well as the mayor's race; Ostrom says there are plenty of others.

"In Snohomish County, there are some important races between candidates who are focused on protecting rural areas and quality of life, and other candidates who are more pro-development. In Whatcom County, there are some real important races too, between some progressive candidates and folks who are more conservative.

Washington voters should have received ballots by now. For those who haven't, it's time to call the county auditor's office and request one. The Washington Secretary of State's office has contact information for all county auditors and election departments listed online at [www.secstate.wa.gov](http://www.secstate.wa.gov). Pierce County is the only Washington county that still has polling places.

*Fuse Washington* puts out an online voters guide, which Ostrom says includes information about the candidates' backgrounds and who has endorsed them. It's at [progressivevotersguide.org](http://progressivevotersguide.org).