



Public Information

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency • Weights and Measures

Protecting Consumers

Our Service Is Your Economic Protection

Weights and Measures is mandated by state law to protect the interests of the buyer and seller to ensure honesty and integrity of everyday business transactions. This protection is accomplished through our continuous and systematic inspection of all equipment that weighs or measures a commodity that is sold. We check scanner systems for pricing accuracy and packaged products for stated net contents. Every transaction involving the exchange of goods, property and service is affected in a very vital way by some form of weights and measures. The use of uniform weights and Measures is extremely important, even though many buyers and sellers are rarely aware of them.

Weights and Measures may be ranked among the necessities of life to every individual of human society. They enter into the economical arrangements and daily concerns of every day family. They are necessary to every occupation of human industry; to the distribution and security of every species of property; to every transaction of trade and commerce; to the labors of husbandman; to the ingenuity of the artificer; to the studies of the philosopher; to the researching of the antiquarian; to the navigation of the mariner and the marches of the soldier; to all the exchanges of peace, and all the operations of war. The knowledge of them, as in established use, is among the first elements of education and is often learned by those who learn nothing else, not even to read and write. This knowledge is riveted in the memory by the habitual application of it to the employments of men throughout life.

John Quincy Adams

Excerpt from the Report on Weights and Measures by the secretary of State made to the Senate on February 22, 1821

Weights and Measures Offers Protection To The Customer Through The Following Programs

1. **Quantity Control-** Inspect all packaged commodities to ensure they contain the proper amount and have the correct labeling. This program also investigates deceptive packaging and makes test purchases to ensure compliance.
2. **Device Inspection-** Inspect and test all commercially used weighing and measuring devices, including scales, such as: computing, pharmacy, hopper, vehicle; and meters, such as: gasoline dispensers, fabric measures, taxi meters, rental car odometers, electric, and water. Devices that do not pass inspection are taken out of service until repaired.
3. **Petroleum-** Check the quality and labeling of petroleum products as well as service station advertising. This includes checking gasoline, octane and lead content; boiling points of brake fluids; as well as quality standards of motor oils and anti-freeze.

4. **Support Services-** Investigate all complaints received from consumers; initiate investigations into possible unlawful practices; coordinate with the District Attorney in the prosecution of violators; conduct educational programs, displays, and brochures to educate the public in proper shopping habits.
5. **Weighmaster-** Inspect licensed weighmasters to ensure the accuracy of the certificates issued, such as those for moving household goods.

Advice To The Consumer

Watch the weighing or measuring instrument. Make sure it starts at zero or you may be paying for something you didn't get.

- ▶ When buying gasoline, look at the pump meter before the start of fuel delivery. The meter should be cleared and the computer indicator set at zero.
- ▶ Packaged size may be deceptive – don't be fooled by apparent size. Remember that KING SIZE, GIANT SIZE, FAMILY SIZE, etc., mean nothing. Read the label for quality statement. Compare prices per ounce among different sizes and among different brands.
- ▶ Check your receipts, especially scanned items on sale, for price accuracy.
- ▶ Buy solid commodities by weight, rather than by count, whenever possible.
- ▶ Learn the unit price (price per pound, per quart, etc.) of what you buy and make sure that you are paying the correct price for the quantity received.
- ▶ The weight of paper wrapping and the containers used in prepackaging meat and other items must not be included. All packaged items must indicate NET WEIGHT.
- ▶ Learn to read scale and meter indications and observe the weighing and measuring of your purchases.
- ▶ Just as you demand accurate change from a cashier, demand accurate weight and measure in your purchases to avoid being "shortchanged."
- ▶ Some stores provide scales on which you can check weights of your purchases. Use them.
- ▶ Propane meters must be reset by the attendant fueling your bottle; watch that the meter is zeroed before the attendant begins to fuel.

Report suspected inaccuracies or violations of the weights and measures laws and regulations of the Department of Weights and Measures.

All consumer complaints will be investigated.

We Respond To And Resolve Citizens' Complaints

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| ▶ Shelf Price / Scanner | ▶ Octane Rating In Question |
| ▶ Deceptive Packaging | ▶ Water In Fuel |
| ▶ Short Measure Gasoline Delivery | ▶ Recycling Inaccuracies |
| ▶ Short Weight Products | ▶ Posted Or Advertised Price Not Honored |
| ▶ Percent Off Not Taken At Register | |

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