The Consolidated Weights and Measures Act
Report to the Pennsylvania General Assembly
Title 3 Pa C.S.A. Chapter 41, Title 70

March 2017
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Overview

Consumer protection is a critical part of the work done by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. The Division of Weights and Measures exists for one reason: making sure Pennsylvania consumers get what they pay for.

The Division of Weights and Measures, part of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Ride and Measurement Standards, was created to help ensure equity in the marketplace through laws and regulations, uniform inspection and testing procedures, and certified and knowledgeable inspectors.

The division is empowered through the Consolidated Weights and Measures Act, Title 3 Pa C.S.A. Chapter 41, with additional regulations found in Title 70. The act requires the department to describe all relevant activities of the state inspectors of weights and measures, Certified Examiners of Weights and Measures (CEWMs), and city and county sealers of weights and measures for the preceding calendar year.

The division is required to inspect weighing and measuring devices on a set schedule: either an annual inspection or at some greater interval not to exceed every fifth year, depending on the device. The division conducts these inspections through its regionally-assigned inspectors and supervisors and CEWMs. These inspectors and supervisors work with the remaining county and city sealers who conduct weights and measures activities in their respective jurisdictions through an ongoing Memorandum of Understanding with the department.

Included in the appendices of this report are the spreadsheets outlining the activities of the division’s personnel, county and city sealers, and CEWMs for 2016. The appendices also include a map that identifies the seven regions into which the division is divided, the supervisors responsible for each region, and the existing county and city sealer programs with their respective contact information.
Consumer Education and Outreach
As part of the commonwealth’s transparency efforts, the division continues to use its online inspection database that allows consumers to access inspection reports. This application can be found www.pda.state.pa.us/WMIInspections. Visit the database to see the latest inspection reports for local businesses and devices.

The website also includes an online complaint form that consumers can use to alert the department to potentially inaccurate devices. The number of consumer complaints by location is included as part of the report spreadsheets in the appendix.

The “Tested and Approved” and “Rejected” seals placed on each item that is inspected by the department feature the state’s toll-free number, 1-877-TEST-007, which consumers can use to register complaints or concerns about scales, gas pumps and other state-regulated measuring devices. The red rejected seal serves as a warning to consumers that the device it is affixed to is in need of service or repair. These seals indicate a pending issue, and that the department is working with the device owner to correct it. In many cases, a device with a rejected seal may still be in service if the issue is a repair that does not affect the accuracy of the device, or if the accuracy of the device is in the consumer’s favor. Devices found to be out of operational condition, or beyond the acceptable tolerance levels and detrimental to the consumer, are taken out of service immediately (made unusable by the consumer) until repairs are made and the device is found to be operating within allowable tolerances.
Weights and Measures Inspections
The Division of Weights and Measures is responsible for inspecting devices such as scales and meters, small-retail to large-capacity truck scales, truck-mounted fuel meters, liquid propane gas meters, retail fuel pumps, compressed natural gas meters, grain moisture meters, load rack meters, timing devices (except parking meters), and all consumer scanning systems (UPC/PLU).

Inspection Details
The division inspects all devices in 54 of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties and provides support to the remaining 13 county sealer programs and one city sealer program. The division is also responsible for ensuring consumer questions and concerns are addressed in a timely manner.

Enforcement Actions
The state, through Act 155 of 1996, adopts many of the federal standards created by the National Institute of Standards and Technology as found in its Handbook 44, Handbook 130, and other related publications. As devices and systems are found to be faulty or beyond the acceptable tolerance levels, action is taken to formally acknowledge the concerns of the state and bring the device into compliance. Written warnings are the first step in acknowledging an issue with a device or with a business or vendor. The number of warnings, citations and prosecutions are included in the appendix of this report.

Certified Examiner of Weights and Measures Program
Act 155 of 1996 amended PA C.S.A. Chapter 41, § 4110 (a)(4) and authorizes the department to use private industry professionals who have been trained and certified to conduct field-level inspections on behalf of the department. With this use of department-trained, tested and certified professionals, the weights and measures division personnel serve as the quality control auditors who monitor this program’s implementation, provide the final assurances that the law is being upheld, and that certified examiners are protecting the consumers they represent.

The CEWM program applies only to devices under the direct responsibility of the department to inspect. Understanding the need to monitor these inspections, the department is diligent in its duty to conduct random and thorough inspections and audits of all CEWM program inspections, as mandated.

In 2012, the program suffered a setback when device types (Vehicle Tank Meters [VTM] and Fuel Dispenser Meters [FDM]) were removed from the list of eligible devices, removing a valuable opportunity for the program to leverage this public-private partnership opportunity in meaningful way.

The bureau currently has CEWMs for liquid propane gas (LPG) devices and in the spring of 2016, the bureau expanded the program to include large capacity scales (LCS). The number of devices inspected by CEWMs are represented in the appendix included in this report.
**Certified UPC/PLU Inspector Program**

In line with the Consolidated Weights and Measures Act, the division developed a Certified Universal Product Code (UPC) and Price Look-Up (PLU) Inspector Program. Scanning systems and devices are inspected annually by the division or private business, as allowed by the act. UPC/PLU device inspectors complete a training course conducted by the division every three years.

**Fuel Quality (Octane) Testing Program**

In line with the Consolidated Weights and Measures Act, the division developed a fuel quality testing program that randomly samples gasoline at retail locations to ensure that the octane content advertised meets established standards. This program is separate from the bureau’s ongoing ability to address individual consumer concerns for specific fuel quality issues.

The bureau collected 260 random fuel samples from retailers throughout Pennsylvania in 2016; of the 260 samples tested, four failed to meet the specifications of the advertised octane rating. The retailers resolved the issue immediately (in all cases the octane rating was off by less than 1 percent).

In addition to the random fuel quality testing, the division tested 28 consumer fuel quality samples tested in 2016 in response to consumer complaints. Of the 28 samples tested, five failed (two for having an octane level below the advertised level, two for having water content above allowable level, and one for not being the advertised product, K-1 kerosene).

**Appendix**

Please see the following appendices, including:

- 2016 Yearly Inspection Activity Table
- Regional and County Sealer Map
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**TOTAL DEVICES INSPECTED**

- **LPG-398**: 17
- **LPG-402**: 31
- **LPG-406**: 1
- **LPG-408**: 65
- **LPG-432**: 8
- **LPG-436**: 18
- **LPG-437**: 3
- **LPG-440**: 2
- **LPG-441**: 2
- **LPG-446**: 35
- **LPG-450**: 1
- **LPG-451**: 1
- **LPG-453**: 13
- **LPG-454**: 1

**Total**: 235

**Statewide Totals**: 48,834 2,190 1,519 166 1,881 313 455 40 10,829 588 76,207 8,689 2,235 235 935 120 14 4 300 30 3,387 124 420 52 147,016 430 124 13

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**Bureau of Ride and Measurement Standards**

**Weights and Measures Division**

**2016 Inspection Statistics**
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- **FDM** - Fuel Dispenser Meter
- **VTM** - Vehicle Tank Meter
- **LPG** - Liquid Propane Gas
- **LRM** - Load Rack Meter
- **GMM** - Grain Moisture Meter
Bureau of Ride & Measurement Standards
Weights and Measures Division

Adams  Thomas Leedy
717.334.8603  Fax 717.334.1822
tleedy@adamscounty.us

Allegheny  Frank Pollock
412.350.2576  Fax 412.350.2578
Frank.Pollock@AlleghenyCounty.US

Beaver  Ronald Zuccaro
724-622-2428  Fax 724.847.1058
rdzuccaro1211@aol.com

Bucks  Michael Bannon
215.348.7442  Fax 215.348.4570
mdbannon@BucksCounty.org

Centre  Ronald L. Williams, Jr.
814.355.8746  RLWillia@CO.Centre.pa.us

Cumberland  John Bitner
717.240.6349  Fax 717.240.7754
jbitner@ccpa.net

Delaware  Evelyn Yancoskie
610.891.4865  Fax 610.566.3947
yancoskiee@co.delaware.pa.us

Greene  Gene Lee
724.852.5210  Fax 724.627.5428
glee@co.greene.pa.us

Montour  Gerald R. Buckley
570.271.3000
Thebuck1@ptd.net

Northampton  John Keppel
610-829-6223
jkeppel@northamptoncounty.org

Sullivan  Gerald R. Buckley
570.271.3000
Thebuck1@ptd.net

Westmoreland  Greg McCloskey
724.830.3980  Fax 724.830.3969
gmcclosk@co.westmoreland.pa.us

York  Jim Crager
717.840.7664  Fax 717.840.7201
jscrager@york-county.org

City of Scranton  Todd Cortese
570.348.4153
tcortese@scrantonpa.gov

State Toll-Free Consumer Line 1-877-TEST-007
(with two digit county codes)