



# Southern Weights & Measures Association

110th Edition

SWMA Newsletter

July 2007

June 13, 2007

Dear Friends,

Arkansas is looking forward to hosting the 62nd Annual Meeting of the Southern Weights and Measures Association. The meeting will be held October 21st - 24th at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock, Arkansas. The direct phone number to the DoubleTree Hotel is 1-501-372-4371. You may also call the DoubleTree Hotel's toll free reservations line at 1-800-222-8733. In order to receive the special conference rate of \$109.00 plus tax, you must specify that you are attending the Southern Weights and Measures Association meeting. The cut-off date for reserving your room at the conference rate is September 21, 2007. It is important to reserve your room as soon as possible.

While in Little Rock, you will find many choices for fun and entertainment. The DoubleTree Hotel is close to the River Market District in downtown Little Rock. The Rivermarket District has various restaurants and nighttime entertainment. Please visit [www.arkansas.com](http://www.arkansas.com) to see what might be on the calendar of events that might interest you and your family. Be sure and bring the family! We have an outing planned for Monday to take those who are interested to Hot Springs for a day of shopping, leisurely walk, or treat yourself to a spa in a relaxing Hot Springs bathhouse. There is an evening reception planned for Tuesday night that will be held at the Little Rock Supper Club with live entertainment.

Please take the time to complete your Registration Form and make your hotel reservations as soon as possible. We are planning for a great conference and there will be many important technical issues to be discussed and voted upon. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Tim Chesser, Roger Frazier, or Tammy Winsor at 501-570-1159. My staff and I are looking forward to seeing everyone here for the 2007 Southern Weights and Measures Association Conference!

Sincerely,

Tom Pugh

President Southern Weights and Measures Association

## JURISDICTIONAL NEWS

### ARKANSAS

We are looking forward to seeing you at the 62nd Annual Southern Weights and Measures Conference that will be held in Little Rock, Arkansas October 21-24, 2007. The conference will be held at the DoubleTree Hotel in lovely downtown Little Rock. You can make reservations by calling 1-800-222-8733 or 501-372-4371. The hotel is located close to the River Market district, which has restaurants and entertainment to choose from. The DoubleTree hotel offers a shuttle to within 5 miles of the hotel and there is also a trolley that runs from downtown Little Rock, across the river to North Little Rock. The staff of the Bureau of Standards will also be available for transportation.

Be sure and bring the whole family! There are numerous things in downtown Little Rock to fit all ages. From The Clinton Library, Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum where you can tour the USS Razorback, the longest servicing submarine in the world, to the Museum of Discovery for Children. There are various art galleries, museums and shops to choose from. There will be a Broadway musical at the Robinson Center, October 23-25 called A Ring of Fire@ about Johnny Cash. The farmers market will be open for fresh vegetables on October 23rd. There are various nightlife spots for entertainment in the River Market District. You can access the website [www.littlerock.com](http://www.littlerock.com) for the calendar of events to help plan your entertainment.

The fall foliage should be in full vibrant color. The average temperature in October ranges from highs around 74 degrees to lows in the evenings around 50 degrees.

For those of you who enjoy golfing, we have a morning tee time set for Sunday, October 22 at 8 am. For more information about the golf course you can check the website out at [www.countryclubofarkansas.com](http://www.countryclubofarkansas.com).

Be sure and complete the Registration Form you will be receiving in the mail and make your hotel reservations as soon as possible. We are planning for a great conference and can't wait to see you there! 🍷

## GEORGIA

As we approach the end of our fiscal year, we are fortunate enough to have some money left over to purchase some new equipment for our Fuel Laboratory and Weights and Measures Laboratory. We also are purchasing two new high-speed slip-in units for our retail fuel program. We have had a busy time in the last couple of months with more than 400 Shell stations in the Greater Metro Atlanta area that have converted to ethanol blended gas at their stations. Our complaints on retail stations have increased after the price of gas topped the 3 dollar per gallon amount in the state. Our retail fuel inspectors have been asked to increase there samples collected to four cases a week to catch up on some stations that are behind in sampling.

The other big topic in the Fuel and Measures section has been the talk of temperature compensation at retail pumps. Our Director Rich Lewis and Ag. Mgr. Marvin Pound will be attending the National Conference in Utah

in July and this subject will certainly get a lot of attention. One of our LP inspectors, Steve Brannon, will be attending the Annual Georgia L.P. Gas meeting at Hilton Head, S.C. in July and will be discussing topics of interest with the members of the L.P. association.

Brian Grace, Metrologist I, has returned from basic Metrologist in Gaithersburg MD and is putting his new found knowledge to good use. During June our Department Fuel Consultant, Curt Williams, attended the annual ASTM meeting in Miami and the Georgia Convenience Store Association meeting.

We in the state of Georgia have been in the 3rd worst drought in over 100 years. We have seen shortages of off road diesel fuel in South Georgia due to the increase in crop irrigation. We have also had some terrible forest fires in the Southern part of the state. ☞

## MARYLAND

May 23 and 24, 2007 – Continuing with the Back to Basics theme, a Training School was held in the Annapolis office for the field staff covering the General Code of Handbook 44. Our method for the training was a new approach. We picked a day and told our inspectors to stay home or go to a quiet place and for each code section in the General Code give their interpretation, in their own words. Some wrote long explanations, some short. We reviewed all and the person with the best explanation (for example: G.A.2.) got up and was the teacher for that code section. Everyone taught at least one section and the dialog was outstanding. At the end, we gave a copy of how we interpreted the sections in the office. The class was a great success according to the inspectors.

We are beginning our seasonal special activities of inspections. Inspections of LP gas meters and VTMs is underway.

The Maryland State Fair will be held August 24 through September 3, 2007, and the theme for this year's fair is "The Maryland Department of Agriculture".

As of this date the vacancy created by the retirement of Bob Eaves in March has not been filled. Mike Frailer, Don Mason and Ed Payne, Field Supervisors, have been sharing Bob's duties until the position is filled.

The following civil penalties have been issued.

On March 5, 2007, we received \$1,000.00 for a civil penalty (2nd violation) assessed to LaMart, Silver Spring, MD. The civil penalty was assessed for short weight packages during routine package inspections.

On March 23, 2007, we received \$750.00 for a civil penalty assessed to Giant Food #357, Bethesda, MD. The civil penalty was assessed for short weight packages.

On April 3, 2007, we received \$250.00 for a civil penalty assessed to Security Sunoco, Baltimore, MD. The civil penalty was assessed for selling gasoline at a price greater than advertised. This action was in response to a consumer complaint.

On April 24, 2007, we received \$250.00 for a civil penalty assessed to Phu Xuan Food Market. The civil penalty was assessed for short weight and labeling violations during routine inspections.

On May 3, 2007, we received \$2,000.00 for a civil penalty (3rd violation) assessed to La Mart, Baltimore, MD. The civil penalty was assessed for short weight packaged during routine inspections.

On May 25, 2007, we received \$150.00 for a civil penalty assessed to Amos Meats, Baltimore, MD. The civil penalty was assessed for short weight test purchases.

On June 8, 2007, we received \$1,250.00 for civil penalties assessed to Giant Food #327, Bethesda, MD. The civil penalties were assessed for short weight test purchases and short weight packages found during routine inspections. ☞

## NORTH CAROLINA

### LP-Gas Section

The LP-Gas Inspectors attended two LP-Gas equipment company open houses recently to meet with vendors, manufacturer's representatives, and gas company employees. This helps them with making industry contacts and keeping abreast of emerging equipment and technologies.

Richard Fredenburg, our LP-Gas Engineer made presentations about changes to the LP-Gas Code to both the Greensboro Fire Department and to the North Carolina Fire Prevention School. These were done at the request of each organization and it helps us to maintain a good working relationship with them.

Richard also attended the National Fire Protection Association Annual Meeting in Boston during the first week of June. The main purpose was to participate in the Technical Committee for LP-Gases meeting and the Technical Session where the LP-Gas Code changes were voted on. He also participated in some of the education sessions on the Codes and Standards track.

### Standards Lab

After nursing the chiller at the Standards Lab along through nine compressors, three condenser coils, automatic damper fan louvers, and hot gas bypass modification to allow it to operate in cold weather, and facing approximately \$29,000 to “fix it so it would be reliable”, we replaced it with a new chiller (of a different brand). The changeover went well, taking a little under six hours, start to finish, one Saturday afternoon. The lab never even went out of control. There is little truth to the rumor that it might have gone even faster if Cliff and L.F. hadn’t “supervised” the installation, asking a bazillion questions!

Phil Nguyen left the lab for greener paychecks to work with the NC Department of Corrections. We’re still evaluating what it says about the lab staff that he traded us for maximum-security inmates, but we’re relatively sure the significant promotion was the deciding factor. He’ll need that pay raise since he and his wife are the proud parents of their first child, Angelina, born on June 24, 2007. We do wish Phil and his growing family the best!

Joey Creasy will replace Phil as the Laboratory Helper (Maintenance Mechanic II) at the laboratory on June 29th. We look forward having Joey on board - especially L.F. and Van who say the AC just isn’t working on the lawn mower this summer.

So far, L.F. has been successful in chasing off two bulldozers and convincing a paving crew to resurface the road in front of the lab after hours. (Okay, actually the bulldozer crew was working on a project over the creek and through the woods, well beyond the lab and yes, begging was involved to get the paving done after hours.) His luck will probably run out soon and construction will start on the various facilities planned around the lab. A new lab was not included in either version of the State budget currently being reconciled between the NC Senate and House. However, it looks likely that we will have funding to purchase robotic mass comparators that will allow Echelon I and II mass comparisons to run after hours as construction around the lab begins. This might add new meaning to working smarter, not harder.

The Standards Laboratory is now less isolated from the E-World. A new high-speed line connected to the State ITS server has been installed to replace their much slower DSL connection. WEB site access and file download times have decreased significantly. “File Downloading...” naps have been eliminated completely!

L.F., Cliff, and Van are looking forward to the NCSL International Workshop and Symposium in St. Paul, MN in a few weeks. They hope to see many of the SWMA metrologists at this very informative and productive meeting of the leading measurement authorities from around the world.

### Measurement Section

The Measurement Section is fully staffed for the first time in many, many years with the exception of Arlene Snow who is out on medical leave have recently had back surgery. She is a Retail Weights and Measures inspector in the Winston-Salem

area. A couple of guys are still on light duty assignments, but at least they are still back on the job.

As usual prices of gasoline and diesel have been “fuel” for keeping us on the go, handling concerns and complaints of the dispenser starting before product begins to flow, shortages, overcharges and the like. As always they are top priority.

Price scanning errors are still a major concern. We have, to date for 2007, received payment on 31 civil penalties (a few more than last year at this time), and have several pending on locations exceeding the 2% overcharge error rate. On a positive note, we have been returning to locations approximately 60 days after a civil penalty has been issued. Only one out of twelve have exceeded the 2% overcharge error rate and have been issued another civil penalty.

### Motor Fuels Lab

The EPA issued a waiver of 7.8 psi gasoline on June 1, allowing terminals to receive 9.0 psi gasoline into their 7.8 psi tanks until June 11th. Repairs to the pipeline led to temporary shortages, which prompted the request. To ensure regulatory uniformity, the Standards Division will observe the wavier and its stated timelines.

David Moninger has joined our staff as an Octane Rating Analyst. He has previous petroleum experience in private industry.

Tony and Sharon Winborne retired at the end of April. Both were career employees - Tony worked as a Chemist I for 36 ½ years and Sharon worked as Chemistry Technician and later as Octane Rating Analyst for a total of 38 ½ years. Congratulations to you both!

We are expecting delivery of several new laboratory instruments: GC, FTIR and Pour Point/Cloud Point Apparatus. We are purchasing these instruments, primarily to analyze biodiesel samples. We have several producers of biodiesel in the state and there seems a growing interest in this area, based on the phone calls and emails we are getting. ☪

## TENNESSEE

The upcoming National Conference on Weights and Measures may prove to be one of the most interesting conferences in recent history with the discussion of automatic temperature compensation. A number of articles and letters have been written on this subject along with testimony by Dick Suiter, NIST/WMD, Mike Cleary, NCWM Chairman, and others before the United States Congress. Dick and Mike did an excellent job in their testimony. Both sides of this discussion are passionate in their feelings and beliefs and will likely offer significant oral and written testimony regarding this matter during the NCWM in Salt Lake City, Utah. Randy Jennings and Bob Williams will be in attendance at the conference.

Our inspection staff will be in Nashville during the last week in June for training on a number of subjects. Tom Coleman, NIST/WMD, will be conducting training on Handbook 133 while Cary Ainsworth, USDA/GIPSA, will be working with our large scale inspectors on vehicle and livestock scales. We have a number of relatively new inspectors and this training will

assist them in their routine work. We would like to thank Tom and Cary for taking their time to provide this training.

We would like to welcome Rachel Graff to our staff as a Weights and Measures Inspector 2. She will be responsible for inspecting pumps and small scales along with checkweighing and price verification inspections in a nine (9) county area in Middle Tennessee. Rachel is a recent graduate of Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville, TN and will be a definite asset to our weights and measures staff.

This is a very busy time of the year for us as our inspectors are on schedule to complete all mandated inspections prior to June 30. Likewise, our data entry section is working very hard to enter this data in order to update our files.

We have received many calls from both the electronic and print media requesting information related to our retail fuel dispenser and fuel quality inspection programs. Most of the media have also requested to accompany an inspector while they are conducting routine inspections. We have been very pleased with the positive light in which our department and work has been portrayed. †

### **Contact SWMA**

The SWMA Newsletter is published quarterly.  
Annual dues are \$25.

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