



Southern Weights & Measures Association

142nd Edition

SWMA Newsletter

October 2015

JURISDICTIONAL NEWS

FLORIDA

Florida conducted a statewide sweep of all motor fuel dispensers earlier this year looking for credit card skimmers and found 103 of the illegal devices (see May 21, 2015 press release below). Smaller, localized regional sweeps have since been conducted bringing the total number to 133 to date. Unfortunately, this number has grown since May, but inspectors are still out there sweeping the state helping to protect citizens and visitors from unknowingly having their credit card information compromised. Based on department estimates removing 133 illegal skimmers from circulation helped prevent \$14,669,900 in economic damages (theft) to residents and visitors to Florida.

Cracking Down on Skimmers

May 21, 2015



Friend,

Identity theft has become a major problem in recent years. Countless Americans have had their identities stolen, resulting in more than \$24.6 billion in annual losses. Credit card skimmers, devices hidden in gas pumps, are one way that thieves take advantage of consumers.

But we're working to protect consumers from this growing threat. Recently, we inspected pumps at more than 7,500 gas stations from Pensacola to Key West and removed 103 credit card skimmers stealing our residents' and visitors' hard-earned money. In addition to the statewide sweep, we're partnering with gas stations to identify ways to prevent this crime.

There are steps you, too, can take to protect yourself and avoid skimmers at gas stations:

- Pay in cash inside the store to ensure credit card information stays safe.
- Check to make sure the gas pump dispenser cabinet is closed and has not been tampered with. Many stations are now securing the cabinet with security tape to indicate if the cabinet has been accessed by unauthorized individuals.
- Try to use a gas pump closer to the front of the store. Thieves often place skimmers at the gas pumps farther away from the store so they aren't noticed as quickly.
- Use a credit card instead of a debit card. Credit cards have better fraud protection, and the money is not deducted immediately from an account.
- If using a debit card at the pump, choose to run it as a credit card instead of putting a PIN number in. That way, the PIN number is safe.
- Monitor bank accounts regularly to identify any unauthorized charges.
- Consumers who suspect their credit card number has been compromised should report it immediately to authorities and their credit card company.

For more information on what we are doing to protect you from credit card skimmers, visit FreshFromFlorida.com.

Sincerely,

Adam

Additional information may be found on the link below.

<http://www.freshfromflorida.com/News-Events/Commissioner-s-Email-Update/2015-Email-Updates/Email-Update-May-21> 

MARYLAND

The arrival of cool nights and changing leaves means summer has come to a close and fall is finally upon us. Most inspectors stayed extremely busy through the hot and humid summer months, inspecting gas stations and oil trucks, while heavy capacity inspectors, Chuck Coleman and Joseph Boako, have been working hard to inspect all the livestock, vehicle and other large scales throughout the state. Inspector Derrick Jones has been training with Inspector Coleman to learn how to drive and operate the large scale test truck. We look forward to having another heavy capacity inspector to assist with the workload.

The cooler weather has allowed us to begin inspections on truck mounted and stationary propane meters with our two new 100 gallon lpg provers and two new 25 gallon lpg provers. In addition to having new provers to adapt

to, this was also the first time that we have used the WinWam inspection software for our lpg inspections. Special thanks to John Hartman who has helped iron out the kinks by being the first in the field to inspect propane meters with the new provers and inspection software.

Our resident grain guru Aaron Webb is hard at work collecting and sorting grain samples from across the state that will be used to inspect grain moisture meters in the spring.

In non-inspection related news, Maryland Weights and Measures had a booth in the agriculture building at the Maryland State Fair, which was held the first week in September. The display included information for consumers related to receiving the proper amount of fuel at a gas station, weighing of items and labeling requirements in the marketplace, and what a full cord of firewood looks like.



Field Inspector Tong Hsu has agreed to lend a hand in the metrology laboratory, where we currently have two vacancies. Tong has completed his Fundamentals of Metrology training at NIST and is scheduled for the Mass Metrology Seminar at the end of October. Zacharias Tripoulas, Elizabeth Koncki and Joe Eccleston recently completed the Volume Metrology Seminar at NIST and look forward to implementing what they learned here in our own laboratory.

For FY 2015, field inspectors conducted 850 large scale inspections (19.2% in violation); 507 medium scales (12.2% in violation); and 9,213 small scale inspections (19.3% in violation).

The meters inspected were 21,333 retail motor fuel meters (22.5% in violation); 383 propane gas meters (25.3% in violation); and 1,028 vehicle tank meters (13.3% in violation). Also, 114 grain moisture meters (19.3% in violation) were inspected.

Other inspections include 1,752 tare inspections (11.6% in violation); 10,851 items for price verification (2.7% in violation), 6,606 packaging lots (20.9% in violation); and 1,559 delivery tickets (0.5% in violation). The NTEP laboratory conducted 40 type evaluations of devices. The program investigated 516 consumer complaints, most of which were related to retail motor fuel dispenser accuracy.

Finally, congratulations are in order for a few members of our staff. Field Inspectors Katie Hall, Dan Huff, Richard Kendall, John Hartman, Derrick Jones and Tong Hsu recently received upgrades for their continued hard work and dedication here in our department. Field Inspector Chuck Coleman was recently presented with a long service award for 30 years of service to the State of Maryland. 🏆

MISSISSIPPI

We look forward to welcoming you to the Hospitality State and to the 70th Annual Meeting of the Southern Weights and Measures Association. The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce is working hard to make this year’s SWMA conference a success. **The conference will be held October 25th – 28th at the Golden Nugget Casino Hotel in Biloxi, Mississippi. The number for making hotel reservations is 1-800-777-7568 or on the website at <http://www.goldennugget.com/Biloxi>. Be sure to mention you are attending the SWMA and/or Group Code: S156167 when making your reservations. The cutoff date for booking rooms at the conference rate of \$99 plus taxes and fees was extended through Tuesday, October 6, 2015.** Registration for the conference can be completed on the SWMA website www.swma.org, where you will also find the most recent conference agenda.

Consumer Protection Division:

So far this fiscal year, the Consumer Protection Division has performed 314 UPC inspections, 888 scale inspections in 143 retail food establishments, and 130 net weight package check inspections.



In personnel news, Jonathan Peeples (left) of Louisville, Mississippi, joined our Division in August.



Supervisor Rob Clanton (right) recently passed the NCWM Small Capacity Weighing Systems Class III Certification.

Petroleum Division:

The Petroleum Division recently observed an inspection procedure at the State of Mississippi’s only LNG site. Several participants played a role in the certification procedure. Thanks to Greg Register with Clean Energy and his team for the demonstration as well as MDAC’s Weights and Measures division for working through the scale process. It was interesting to see the complete process and visit with several truckers as they were filling up and to hear their observations of the product.



The division inspectors recently participated in a conference hosted by the MS Department of Environmental Quality. The conference was an opportunity to share information with some of the same businesses regulated by both agencies. The conference was very informative and gave division staff an opportunity to visit with distributors, store owners and service repairmen concerning requirements under the law.



MDAC welcomes new hire Caleb Stone (left) to the Petroleum Division. Caleb will be in training for the next several weeks and will cover the Northeastern corner of the state, which includes Tunica, DeSoto, Quitman, Tate, Panola and Coahoma counties. We look forward to having Caleb on our team.

Administrative Penalties assessed for non-complaint fuel quality issues found in the sampling process totaled to date \$7,000 for Fiscal Year 2016.

Weights and Measures Division:

On August 1, 2015, Brent Bowman (right) became the new Weights and Measures Division Director. He has 20.5 years of experience and several NIST Certifications in the Weights and Measures field. The Bureau of Regulatory Services congratulates Brent and looks forward to supporting him in his new role.



Greg Gholston (left), a Weights and Measures Division inspector since 1995, was recently promoted to Supervisor. He has several NIST Certifications and has attended many NCWM training conferences. Greg has served as an instructor for numerous NIST train-the-trainer classes and has successfully completed the Basic Supervisory Course offered by the MS State Personnel Board. Greg's leadership and teaching abilities



Doug Moak (left), an inspector with the department since 2012 has recently retired. Doug was responsible for the testing of cattle scales and dairy tanks. Doug's work ethic and extensive knowledge will be truly missed.

The inspectors within the Weights and Measures Division were recently trained on the proper procedures for performing inspections and conducting day-to-day activities within the Bureau of Regulatory Services.

The Weights and Measures Division is in the process of interviewing for five inspector positions recently vacated due to retirements and promotions.



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NORTH CAROLINA

Standards Laboratory

During the past quarter several employees took advantage of attending conferences and training events. In the month of July metrologist Van Hyder attended NCSL International Workshop & Symposium, which took place in Grapevine, Texas. Our newest metrologist, Nicholas Cercone attended NIST seminar Fundamentals of Metrology Training in Gaithersburg, Maryland. Finally in the month of September, our annual Carolina Star Safety Conference took place in Greensboro, North Carolina. The theme for this year’s conference was “Were You Safe Today or Just Lucky?” Joe Huntley and Sherry Teachey represented the Standards Laboratory during this period. Special thanks to all the staff members for a job well done and for continuously keeping safety a top priority.

In July, our grain moisture program completed the 2015 air-oven proficiency test for wheat, corn, and soybeans. We are currently waiting for the official results. Corn harvest for the grain moisture section was a success this year, despite dry weather across the state. The state's corn crop was ample and what we collected for our inspection season was of excellent quality.

Soybean season is now upon us and word has it that, barring any severe weather in the next few weeks, this harvest will be a success as well. We look forward to collecting the soybeans needed to complete our grain collection season on a high note.

Sharon Woodard

Measurement Section

Fall is here and crops are being harvested and taken to the buyers and grain elevators. Seasonal work is very busy with tobacco, cotton and peanut scales taking up a lot of time in the past months.

Our NC Mountain State Fair wrapped up in September and was a great success due to the hard work of a lot of people. Our NC State Fair is scheduled for October 15 through October 25 and we will have many employees

working at the fair during this time. It is a fun time even though we are working. We meet fair goers and get to answer questions about our exhibit and what we do in the market place. It surprises me every year some of the comments we get. "We did not know anyone did that", most referring to testing scanners in grocery stores and the testing of correct measure of gasoline from motor fuel devices. The certified scale at our exhibit is a lot of fun. Anyone that wants their true weight can simply step onto our scale and we will print it on a card for them. The ladies mostly know their weight and our scales are always incorrect. We have fair goers that weigh when they get to the fair and they weigh right before they leave to see the amount of great food they consumed while at the fair. No matter what your age you will have a good time at the fair!

All fun aside, normal duties are still taken care of. We are handling fuel related complaints daily and scanner related issues as they are coming in to the office. According to my recent survey of our complaint/request log for last quarter, 86% were handled within 24 hours and the other 14% were handle as soon as we could get to them due to shortage of personnel, device type or they were requests that let us know that inspection on the device would soon expire.

We have had several employees (Dewayne Leatherwood and Tommy Mears) out on medical leave and have welcomed them back. We also have the pleasure to welcome Malachai Williams and Jerry Cansler to the position of Standards Inspector I. They will help fill two of the four vacant positions in the central area. We have several inspectors contemplating retirement and this will lead to more vacancies but we will address them when they occur.

Allen Katalinic

Motor Fuels Section

We've had a number of personnel changes recently. At the end of May, Inspector Byron Goode retired after serving as a field chemist in the Charlotte area for thirty years. In addition, the Field Chemistry Supervisor Deborah Merritt moved to Arizona to take a position as a forensic chemist with the Tucson Police Department. James Milliam, a longtime employee of the Motor Fuels section, stepped in to replace Deborah at the start of August. The Motor Fuels lab also welcomes chemist Nick Renck and field chemists Jade Byrd and Samuel Harper. Nick is filling the vacancy for the dual role chemist/field inspector position in the central laboratory. Mr. Harper joined the section in April to replace retired inspector Scott Sermersheim and Ms. Byrd will be replacing Byron Goode in the Charlotte area in early October.

The lab also added three new Ford Transit mobile testing labs in an effort to start replacing our aging fleet of Dodge Sprinter vans.

At the start of September we saw the first introduction of E15 ethanol blended enter into the marketplace. 🇺🇸

70th Annual Meeting
Southern Weights and Measures Association
October 25th - 28th

Golden Nugget Casino Hotel

<http://www.goldennugget.com/Biloxi>

Biloxi, Mississippi

The SWMA Newsletter is published quarterly: Annual dues are \$50.

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