

## CONSUMER TIPS

**R** When buying an item by count, such as prescription drugs, make sure the label indicates the amount you are to receive.

**R** When buying firewood, be sure to request a receipt which has the name, and the address of the vendor, as well as the delivery date, amount delivered, quantity upon which the price is based and the total price of the amount delivered.

**R** When purchasing gas, be sure to multiply the price per gallon by the number of gallons so you are sure the price is correct.

**R** When purchasing merchandise on a counter scale, remember that the height of the person can cause a difference when reading the indicator on scales that are not electronic.

**R** Over-the-counter-scales and their quantity value indicators must be in plain view of the customer during transactions.

**R** Look for the current year Weights and Measures seals on all weighing devices.

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## COMMUNITY AWARENESS PROGRAMS

To increase Weights and Measures awareness among consumers, County Auditors participate in a variety of outreach or educational programs to help explain the role of the county sealer and the protection consumers and merchants receive.

The purpose of these events is for citizens to realize they have rights as well as responsibilities in the market place.

## GAS PUMPS

Fuel is sold by volume in gallons or liters. A computer in the gasoline pump (retain motor fuel dispenser) calculates what you owe based on the amount and unit price of the gasoline.

Weights and Measures officials post a seal to show that the equipment was tested and found to be accurate.

## FIRE WOOD

In Ohio, the legal method of sale for fire wood is the cord or fraction of a cord.

A "cord" is defined as 128 cubic feet. Fire wood must be labeled in cubic feet or cubic inches.



# WEIGHTS and MEASURES



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**GREENE COUNTY AUDITOR**

Richard Gustafson, Inspector/Sealer  
Greene County Auditor's Office



*A Weights and Measures seal assures consumers of the accuracy of gasoline pumps.*

## **WEIGHTS & MEASURES**

The County Auditor serves as the Sealer of Weights and Measures for the entire County. According to the Ohio Revised Code, Section 319.55, “The Auditor shall see that all state laws relating to weights and measures are strictly enforced throughout his county, and shall assist generally in the prosecution of all violations of such laws.”

Some Ohio cities have also implemented Weights and Measures programs as part of their city services.

This brochure is designed to provide a better understanding of the Weights and Measures Division within the County Auditor’s Office.

The County Auditor is responsible for testing the accuracy of weighing and measuring devices used in the purchase and sale of commodities.

The Director of Agriculture is the State Sealer of Weights and Measures.

The Ohio Department of Agriculture is the custodian of the Ohio primary standards of Weights and Measures, which are traceable to U.S. standards of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in

Gaithersburg, Maryland. The International standards are kept in Paris, France.

According to the 1995 Annual Activities Summary for all jurisdictions in Ohio, inspectors tested approximately 526,903 scales and 88,834 gas pumps. This number is steadily increasing.

As consumers, the products we buy are sold by weight, volume, length, count, or measure.

The time-tested methods of verifying weight, volume and pricing are being replaced by computerized devices.

There are positives as well as cautions involved with the advances in technology.

As U.P.C. pricing and computers are replacing price stickers, consumers receive faster service but they cannot visually verify each item’s price.

Therefore, Weights and Measures officials and merchants must work harder to provide customers with pricing and measuring confidence.

## **CERTIFICATION**

All Weights and Measures inspectors are required to receive training and certification from the Ohio Department of Agriculture, Division of Weights and Measures.

Inspectors must pass a series of 20 tests and 2 exams, as well as attend 18 hours of continuing education class per year to maintain their certification.

## **ERROR RATES**

Error rates vary within each of Ohio’s 88 counties.

Ohio jurisdictions are very responsive to calls. Upon receiving a complaint a Weights and Measures official will usually inspect the site within 24 to 48 hours.

If an error is found, the facility’s equipment may be temporarily shut down or the operators may be fined. Records are maintained for all reported complaints.

## **PRE-PACKAGED COMMODITIES**

All commodities must be marked with a statement declaring net contents. Net weight does not include the weight of the bag, wrapper or container of any kind in which a commodity may be packaged. This is called the **tare weight**, which must be accounted for before the product is weighed. Inspectors from the State and County periodically check the accuracy of these pre-packaged items.

## **U.P.C. SCANNERS**

The Universal Product Code (U.P.C.) is used in most retail stores to scan the price of the item. The price of the item is entered into a computer. When the item is scanned the price will immediately appear on the register. The County Auditor is helping to ensure that the labeled shelf price or the advertised price matches the price appearing at the checkout.

