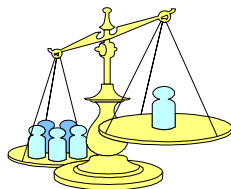


SPOTLIGHT ON WEIGHTS & MEASURES

SONOMA COUNTY SEALER OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES



John Westoby
Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer
133 Aviation Blvd., Ste. 110, Santa Rosa, CA 95403
www.sonoma-county.org/agcomm/weights_measures

Mark Hanson
Chief Deputy Sealer
Phone (707) 565-2371

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Editor D. Keller and C.R. Caporale

WINE AND LANDSCAPER INDUSTRIES WORKSHOPS

Our department hosted two Weighmaster training classes on April 28 and 29. The presentation featured Don Overton, Training Facilitator, State Measurement Standards Petroleum Weighmaster Division.

The first class emphasized the wine industry and was hosted at Matanzas Creek Winery, beautiful gardens and facility. We had a great response with 20 wineries, and approximately 40 people attending. The next day's class was geared toward the landscape supply industry. It was held at the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner's Office conference room.

The classes were an incredible success, and are held a couple of times per year for industries that use a Weighmaster to certify transactions, when commodities are bought and sold when both parties are not present to verify the amount.

FISH SCALES

Salmon season is starting, and calls have been coming in from fisherman to have their scales sealed before they start selling fish. On Friday, April 23 we were at the county

facility at Spud Point Marina to certify scales.

FIREWOOD

A firewood dealer was caught selling short measure firewood in an undercover purchase. A Weights and Measures employee ordered a cord of firewood and two of our inspectors were waiting for the wood to arrive at her home. When the delivery was made, pictures were taken, and the inspectors stacked and measured the wood. The wood was 18% short and a call was made to the dealer to come into the office for a meeting to resolve the shortage and discuss his methods of measuring and delivering firewood. After meeting with the Chief Deputy Sealer and Senior Standards Specialist, he will take corrective measures, and another purchase will be made to verify future deliveries are correct.

COMPLAINTS

There were 10 complaints; five were gas dispensers. Only one of the gas dispenser complaints was found to be valid, the pump was red tagged and put out of service. There were two petroleum complaints received regarding "bad gas". Samples were taken and sent to the state lab; results are pending. A vapor meter was tested on a

COMPLAINTS CONTINUED

complaint and was found bad and put off sale. Only one scanner complaint was received, and no error was found. A Weighmaster complaint on Redwood Bark was inspected, and due to an uneven surface, made the bark appear to be short measure.

INVESTIGATIONS

An unusual complaint was received regarding the size of a storage rental unit. The contract stated the approximate size. One of our senior standards specialists went to Napa County and met with their district attorney, as well as, Dani Jo Handell, Solano County District Attorney, to verify whether or not the case could be enforced. The case was discussed and it was decided that all three counties would survey a random number of storage units, and there were several units found to be less than advertised, possible charges of Bait and Switch would be filed.

Another investigation is being conducted by a number of counties on a supermarket, which has not been consistently taking tares on their deli items. A tare is the inedible or unusable product or container that contains the commodity. This case started in Southern California, and a number of district attorney's are involved with their Weights and Measures jurisdictions.



CONSUMER CORNER

Can't the Weights and Measures Division do something about gas prices?

Until we convert to other forms of energy, we only have control over the accuracy of the volume of product that comes out of the dispenser, and that the price per unit is computing correctly.

CONSUMER TIP

When purchasing items through a scanner, make sure you not only check the price of the items, but also go over your receipt and make sure no items were double scanned or the number of multiple items were correct.

