

## How “Short Measure” Adds Up

If meat selling at \$6.99 a pound, has an error in weighing of only 0.02 lb, the error will cost the consumer 14 cents before the package gets out the front door.

An error of 4 ounces in 5 gallons of gasoline will result in a \$0.15 overcharge on a ten gallon purchase, an incredibly costly error at today’s average pump volumes.

## What Should You Do?

“This scale is not weighing correctly.”

“This package I bought does not have the correct amount in it.”

“I think that gasoline pump is registering more gallons than it’s giving.”

Thoughts such as these occur to some consumers in the course of a day’s shopping. Sometimes these suspicions are correct. Weighing and measuring devices such as scales or gasoline pumps are mechanical instruments, and so are subject to wear and tear as well as error. A malfunction on the packaging line can result in a package not being filled with the stated amount.

What should you do if you feel you have encountered incorrect weights and measures devices or short weight packages?

## Let Us Know!

If you believe that you have experienced any of the aforementioned violations, or that you have a question concerning any Weights and Measures transaction, please let your Delaware County Office of Weights and Measures know.



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# The Weights And Measures Inspector:

A Pamphlet for Consumers



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## Are You Protected?

When a consumer makes a purchase in the supermarket, gasoline station, or other retail establishment, two elements are primary in the decision process: quality and quantity.

Quality is a subjective matter. One person's good quality can be another person's bad taste. In a free market society, deciding on the level of quality to purchase is left to the judgment of the individual purchaser. Government regulates quality only to the extent that certain minimum standards of health and safety are met for the public welfare. Beyond that, each individual is free to make his own choice of "quality".

### Quantity

Not so with quantity. The quantity in the package can be determined, and to a high degree of accuracy. It would be unrealistic for every consumer in the United States to spend the time and effort required verifying the amount contained in each package purchased. It is much more realistic to have a few people checking packages for the general public, so that the consumer can reasonably be sure that when the package is labeled, for example, "one pound", there is one pound in the package.

There are such people. They are checking the quantity of contents of packages in your supermarket today. What they do requires a great deal of training, a thorough technical knowledge of the varying characteristics of different types of commodities, and a wide range of precise measuring equipment and measurement techniques. They are your Weights and Measures inspectors.

## At Your Service!

The Weights and Measures inspector does more than check package quantities. While at work, at any given time they may be found checking the accuracy of such things as scales and other measuring instruments in the supermarket, hardware, drug, or department store, the neighborhood gas station – almost every weighing and measuring device affecting your pocketbook. These officials also check scanning systems, parking meters, and fuel oil delivery trucks – to assure accuracy.

### "That Equity May Prevail"

This is the motto of the National Conference on Weights and Measures. The Conference has been in existence since 1905. Its primary reason for existing is to make the motto "That Equity May Prevail" as true as possible in commerce. Weights and Measures officials from each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, meet each year with industry and consumer representatives to work out laws and codes and methods that will assure that:

- Consumers get what they pay for
- Accuracy prevails in all commercial measurement
- The same system is used nationwide



## Packaging And Labeling

Nearly everything that a consumer buys today is prepackaged. It is important that the correct amount be in a package and that the consumer has adequate and correct information on the outside of the package. For example, the amount contained inside the package must be printed clearly in a specific location on the label.



An aid to consumers for cost comparison in some localities is the posting of the price per pound or price per ounce on the shelf: this is the "unit price".

An indication of the freshness of perishable products is provided in some States by the printing of a date on the package that indicates the last day that the product should be sold or used.

Weights and Measures inspectors play a central role in the marketplace to assure the consumer that packaging, labeling, and pricing requirements are met.