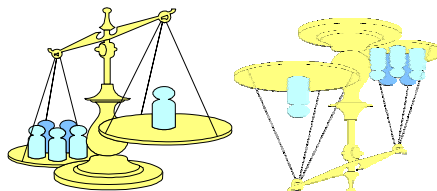


SPOTLIGHT ON WEIGHTS & MEASURES

SONOMA COUNTY SEALER OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES



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MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL AND TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT!!

Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner's and Weights and Measures Offices will be closed from Noon on December 24, 2003 through January 4, 2004. County employees are taking Mandatory Time Off (MTO) in an effort to offset some of the budget shortages. There will be inspectors available in case of emergency.

END OF YEAR INSPECTIONS

The Standard Specialists spent most of the month of November and the first part of December finishing gas dispensers and scales that had not yet been tested for 2003.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES OFFICE UPDATE

The Weights and Measures Division moved to its new location on November 3, 2003. Much of the time has been spent setting up the meter lab, water meter bench and Quantity Control lab. The gas vapor meter lab was moved, but is still not up and running. The division is still in the process of installing the new Bell Prover that is required by the State Measurement

meter under test by more than 2 degrees Fahrenheit. California State Measurement Standards must test and approve the equipment and lab room before the inspectors can start using the Bell Prover to test the meters. The prover and meter under test must be as near the same temperature as possible or an error in testing can occur. Customers have continued to bring meters into the office for testing. Standard Specialist Vasquez loaded the meters up and drove to Napa County to inspect the meters in their lab in order to get them back to the customers. The State will not be able to come out and examine the lab and Bell Prover until January 5, 2003.

The electric meter board in the lab is now up and running. Senior Standard Specialist Ray Sandretto with the help of Jeff Yparreguire rebuilt the electric meter board and it is now in use for testing electric meters brought into the office from mobile home parks. The department greatly appreciates the expertise and hard work of Ray Sandretto enhancing the electric meter program with a new and improved electric meter board.

The water meter bench is not yet ready for use. There is still some electrical work that must be done before the inspectors will be able to use it.

Standards Department in order to test sub-gas vapor meters. Temperatures must not vary from the prover room air, bell prover oil and

QUANTITY CONTROL

Ink cartridges were inspected in December for quantity statements. Quantity Control Specialist Karen Langford from Division of Measurement Standards along with Senior Standard Specialist Keller are looking into computer ink cartridges for accurate net quantity statements. Some of the Brands do not have a net quantity statement on them. The State Division of Measurement Standards received several complaints from consumers stating they did not believe their ink cartridges met the stated net quantity. The Division will be sending out notices to companies that sell ink cartridges informing them they are in violation of the law if they do not have a quantity statement on the package. The companies that do have the stated net quantity will be asked to send the Division samples of the packaging so a dry tare can be obtained. Tare is the weight of all the wrap and packaging the ink comes in.

November usually means a few complaints on turkeys and/or hams. This year we did not receive any complaints. Several markets are selling turkeys at set prices for a certain range of weights. The California Division of Measurement Standards allows this. However, the weight must be on the turkey label and it must be correct.

PETROLEUM

The State Division Petroleum technician sampled several gas and diesel samples in

Sonoma County and two different locations came up low flash point for diesel. Routine samples are collected in the normal course of business to verify compliance with established specifications. These samples are taken and put in a clean container and sealed. The samples are tested in Sacramento in their petroleum lab. Petroleum products must meet

the specifications set forth by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) or the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) Diesel fuel is tested at its flash point. This is the point at which fuel ignites. It is a safety issue for the transportation of fuel. If diesel has been contaminated with some gasoline it can affect the flash point. The storage tanks were shut down until the diesel was brought up to standard.

CONSUMER CORNER

Q: What is the SI unit?

The Systeme International [SI]

Le Systeme international d'Unites officially came into effect in October 1960 and has been officially recognized and adopted by nearly all countries, though the amount of actual usage varies considerably. It is based upon seven principal units, one in each of seven different categories –

<i>Category</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Abbrev.</i>
Length	metre	m
Mass	kilogram	kg
Time	second	s
Electric current	ampere	A
Temperature	kelvin	K
Amount of substance	mole	mol
Luminous intensity	candela	cd

CONSUMER TIP

This time of year consumers are making multiple purchases: **WATCH** as the price of the item shows on the checkout register. Many stores now have scanner boxes at different locations throughout stores in which you can scan the items and see if the item matches the advertised price. Ask the clerk to check the price if you think the scanned price is incorrect. If the scanned price does not agree with the posted price, ask the store manager to correct it. Save the cash register receipt in case you have questions or a problem later on. If your problem is not resolved, contact the local Weights and Measures Office for help.

