



# Southern Weights & Measures Association

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136th Edition

SWMA Newsletter

April 2014

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## NC MEETING

SWMA meeting:

The 2014 SWWA Annual meeting will be held in Raleigh, NC October 5-8. We will be staying at the Hilton North Raleigh/Midtown and we will post details on the website this summer as we set up links for reservations, post agendas and other information. Please note we will begin Sunday morning with a NIST presentation on Training Effectiveness. The target audience is supervisors and managers as we discuss how and why we should follow-up with those employees that we have spent the time and money on to attend training events. Our traditional schedule will resume after lunch that day with agenda reviews.

Stephen ☩

## JURISDICTIONAL NEWS

### GEORGIA

We are finally starting to have some nice spring weather in the State of Georgia. We had a fairly rough winter this year. Back to back snow/ice storms are something we are not use to or prepared for. The Fuel & Measures Division was called upon by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) to help with the state's emergency response. One of our major areas of concern was the state's propane supply. As the demand for propane went up, the supply tightened

and the price skyrocketed. This became a potential disaster for the poultry industry which is one of Georgia's largest industries. Thankfully warm weather is finally here and our propane industry is back to normal.

Speaking of propane; Senior Supervisor Steve Brannon and Inspector Ricky Dorsey recently attended the Georgia Propane Association's annual board meeting. Also, Steve and Ricky will be attending the association's annual meeting in Savannah in June. Steve does a great job of representing us at these meetings.

We continue to see an increase of CNG meters being installed around the state. We have placed roughly a dozen into service recently. We have also inspected a number of DEF meters in the past few months.

Division Director Rich Lewis along with Fuel Lab Director David Au recently met with a couple of local oil companies to discuss the possibility of them bringing e15 into the state. David discussed the state specifications that would need to be met as well as procedures they would need to follow to transition this new product into our state.

Asst. Division Director Doug Killingsworth and Rich Lewis will be attending the NCWMA annual meeting in Detroit in July. Rich is serving on the L & R Committee and is looking forward to some lively discussions this year.

Congratulations to inspector Ricky West on his recent retirement from the Department. Ricky was a long time employee and will be greatly missed. We are now in the process of hiring a new inspector. ☩

## MARYLAND

Longer days can only mean that spring is coming, and with it is a new season of testing propane and oil meters for the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) Weights & Measures Program. Since the weather has broken, we are happy to have our new truck out testing vehicle scales. This shorter, straight body truck will help the program more efficiently inspect and regulate large and vehicle scales.

Inspector Jeff Dean, a one-year inspector, has been training to drive and operate the large-scale, test truck. He is a fast learner. We wish him luck in his upcoming CL test.



In February, field inspectors attended an interesting, in-house training class which included understanding packaging and labeling, with hands-on liquid package testing. This included testing milk, carbonated soda and some packages of odd (metric) sizes. At the end of the training, everyone continued their professional certification by taking the NCWM exam. Our field staff did a great job, putting in the training time and being certified through the NCWM. Our inspectors have completed three of the NCWM tests and, as a result, are all experienced test takers. We look forward to the next exam. Our next staff training session will be in June 2014.



A new employee -- Assistant Chief Joe Eccleston -- was at NIST the first week in April enjoying the *Fundamentals of Metrology* class lead by the esteemed metrology guru Georgia Harris. This same week, our NTEP team Ed Payne and Zach Tripoulas attended the NTEP lab meeting in Albany, NY and toured the new NY (Yankee) lab facility.





O Let us not forget about our grain inspection program which we test annually this time of year as well. Due to recent retirements, one individual remains on staff, Aaron Webb, an Advanced Agriculture Inspector with the responsibilities of not only establishing laboratory grain standards but also inspects all 101 commercial grain moisture meters statewide.

Staffing has not changed since the last newsletter, and MDA continues operating with 15 field inspectors. We have begun the hiring process and will interview candidates this month to fill three vacant positions. We hope to have them onboard and in the field by summer.

Since January, MDA inspectors have taken their knowledge into the field and checked standard packages at 29 Maryland manufacturers of candy, coffee and baked goods. MDA issued 11 stop removal orders at eight firms. Since our February training, we have been inspecting liquid packages at such manufacturers as dairies and soft drink producers. In March, we inspected 10 liquid pack producers and all were approved.

This winter we enforced posted shelf pricing at retail stores with market shares in the automotive parts, wellness and grocery industries. Inspectors conducted price verification inspections at 211 stores from January to March. We issued 32 violation letters and conducted 25 re-inspections due to violations. Civil penalties have been issued to six stores for a total of \$3,250 in penalties.

Maryland Weights and Measures staff continues package testing and price verification enforcement activities. The following enforcement actions have been taken against violators with fines received:

- On February 3, 2014, the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) received \$250.00 for a civil penalty assessed for price verification to CVS #4411 of Baltimore, MD 21215. ☪

## NORTH CAROLINA

### Measurement Section

Jerry is attending the NTEP Lab meeting in New York this week, so you'll have to suffer with me as guest writer.

Fertilizer and Mulch inspections are well under way. Some locations are doing well, but others are struggling with a number of bags out of MAV, the worst situation had every bag in the lot we sampled fail! We believe much of this is due to poor, or lack of, quality control at the packer. These products tend to move quickly through the distribution system so we focus inspections at the packer and distributors to maximize our effort. It is usually an "all hands on deck" event for us, even using the retail motor fuel dispenser inspectors for a few days to minimize our time on site.

We will have a new calibrator starting in a few weeks. We have also had 2 more retirements since the last newsletter. Kenny Reed in Western NC and Ray Winslow in the northeast part of the state left us at the end of February. Both were dual role inspectors, with largely rural areas.

Stephen Benjamin

## Standards Lab

The first of the year is always a busy time of the year for us. We reserve this time on our schedule to have our working standards calibrated and to get ready for customer calibrations. This year we faced no major challenges. We received our standards back in a timely manner and were able to begin customer calibrations by February 1, 2014. I applaud the efforts of our metrologists (Robert Rogers, Kris Simino, Van Hyder, and Ashley Lessard) for a job well done.

Maintaining relative humidity throughout the laboratory has been our biggest challenge so far this year. We are currently under a study to repair and improve the conditions of our HVACs system as it relates to maintaining specified controls of relative humidity and temperature. Temporary solutions have been suggested and we are working to implement those with a long term solution study to be completed soon.

Again this year we will be participating in the Carolina OSHA Star Program. We are assigned to the Northeast regional team and we had our first meeting March 5, 2014 at Person County Health Department in Roxboro, North Carolina. Being able to participate in this program has given us opportunity to network with other non government agencies who have committed themselves to the common goal of keeping safety first. This year's topic is "Living the Safety Life." Our safety team representatives are Van Hyder and Sharon Pulley.

Our Grain Moisture section is at the height of its inspection season. We are looking forward to fair weather as we finish our inspections. Early indications say the wheat crop is looking good. Unless we have a late frost or excessive rainfall, we are very optimistic and expect a good wheat harvest.

Sharon Woodard

## LP-Gas Section

With the new edition of the *LP-Gas Code*, new code requirements and updated references had to be added to the GRID, our internet-based inspection program. This involved our division programmer, programmers in the Emergency Programs Division, and our LP-Gas Engineer. We also took this opportunity of making changes to include some items that were appearing frequently in the "Other" category. All of this while the database was available for normal use.

Our LP-Gas Engineer participated in the National Propane Gas Association Technology, Standards, and Safety Committee meeting in Indianapolis, IN, in early March.

A description of the GRID has been presented in some industry settings. It was presented at a technical session at the NCPGA Board Meeting in late March to show those who are inspected how it works. It will be the subject of an article in the April issue of Butane-Propane News. We went to some effort to lay the groundwork for the program and then adapt an existing inspection database for LP-Gas inspections. Maybe others can use some part of this rather than inventing their own wheel.

Richard Fredenburg

## Motor Fuels Section

With sadness, I will inform the group that a long time employee who in recent years worked as the administrative assistant, passed away in December. Anyone who has called or visited the lab will surely remember the cheerful and positive interactions they had with Ms. Peaches Bass. Peaches was with us for about 33 years and in previous positions did distillations and ran an octane engine. The Motor Fuels Lab is presently interviewing applicants for the position.

Carroll Rogers, our field supervisor retired in January with over 30 years of service. We will all miss his "can do" attitude and willingness to help wherever and whenever needed. We will be advertising his position as soon as we finish interviews for a vacant field inspector position.

The EPA has proposed a rule to eliminate 7.8 psi gasoline in most NC counties. If no negative comments are received the rule will take effect around May 31<sup>st</sup>. This only impacts the Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill and the Greensboro/Winston-Salem areas and they would then use the 9.0 psi gasoline in the summer. The Charlotte area is still required to use 7.8 psi gasoline, which last year cost about 9-10 cents more per gallon than the 9.0 psi.

Art Rupard



MISSISSIPPI

The Consumer Protection Division recently had two members pass two NCWM examinations. Director Adam Choate became earned his Small Capacity Weighing Systems Class III and Package Checking Basic certifications in February, and Supervisor Gary Cushman earned his certifications in March.

In addition, Inspector Reed Howard retired from the Agency in January after 37 years of dedicated service.

Petroleum Division News – April, 2014

The petroleum division is in the process of upgrading its fleet of vehicles. Ford F250's have been purchased minus the standard bed, and flat beds have been custom built to fit the petroleum inspector's specific needs. Not only will the new beds assist the inspector and provide a much safer work environment, but will also provide a safer means of testing in the metrology lab.



Pictured- Reed Howard

Pictured- Mike Kusch inspector located on the MS gulf coast.

Clay Hammons recently obtained Certification in the category of Retail Motor Fuel Dispensing Systems. As part of the petroleum inspector training, all new hires will be provided with the training and materials to also become certified. The division hopes not only have all inspectors certified by FY 2017 but to maintain the certifications as well.

The division will be filling a recently vacated inspector position in the central area of the state.

In administrative news for the division, nearly \$16,000 in penalties and fees has been collected for product failure since July 1st. †

## MEETINGS

The National Conference on Weights and Measures (NCWM) offers many meetings throughout the year that allow every person a voice in the issues facing the weighing and measuring community today. Our meeting attendees have direct impact on the national standards. In the process, you will build valuable working relationships with other industry and government professionals. It all culminates at the NCWM Annual Meeting in July with open hearings followed by the voting session to amend *NIST Handbooks 44, 130, and 133*.

### Future Interim Meetings:

January 18-21, 2015 — Daytona Beach, Florida

### Future Annual Meetings:

July 13-17, 2014 — Detroit, Michigan

July 19-23, 2015 — Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

## 2014 MEETINGS

### AUGUST

- 20th-21st NTEP Grain-Analyzer Sector Meeting - Kansas City, Missouri
- 26th-28th Weighing Sector and Software Sector Meeting
- Weighing Sector Only Meeting - August 26th-27th
- Software Sector Only Meeting - August 27th-28th
- 27th Joint Meeting - Weighing and Software Sectors
- 4th-18th WWMA Annual Meeting - Portland, Oregon†

Contact SWMA: The SWMA Newsletter is published quarterly. Annual dues are \$50. Membership inquiries should be directed to: N. David Smith, SWMA Secretary-Treasurer NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, 1001 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1001 Phone: 919-707-3031 Fax: 919-715-0026 E-Mail: David.Smith@ncagr.gov www.swma.org News may be submitted to: SWMA, 1904 Mission Road, Birmingham, AL 35216 E-mail: wdbrasher@charter.net

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