

Another Year, Another Set of Annual Weights and Measures Results to Celebrate

Release Date: March 1, 2017

Media Contact: Jerad Albracht, 608-224-5007
Bill Cosh, Communications Director, 608-224-5020

MADISON – A gallon of fuel. A pound of green beans. Sixteen ounces of milk. The products we purchase are divided out in increments, each with a specific value. To ensure a fair marketplace, these calculations must be accurate. This is where the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)’s Weights and Measures inspectors step in, testing gas pumps, price scanners, register scales, package weights and fuel quality statewide to confirm that consumers are getting the right products at the right prices.

State weights and measures inspectors conducted 221,420 inspections at 6,287 business locations in 2016. The annual inspection results are in, and 2016 was another great year for Wisconsin shoppers.

“Shoppers at Wisconsin stores were charged accurately or even undercharged around 99% of the time at the gas pump and store register in 2016,” said Frank Frassetto, Division Administrator for Trade and Consumer Protection. “One welcome finding was a 1.3% jump from 2015 in the accuracy of packages sold by weight.”

“Wisconsin businesses work hard to keep the market fair for consumers, and that is clearly represented in the annual results,” said Frassetto.

Today marks the start of the national Weights and Measures Week campaign. What better way to celebrate DATCP’s weights and measures inspectors than to shine a spotlight on the valuable service they provided to Wisconsin consumers last year?

“Weights and measures teams are the unsung heroes of a fair marketplace,” said Frassetto. “These road warriors travel to every corner of the state, testing fuel quality and checking sales equipment at gas stations and grocery and retail stores to ensure that we are getting a fair deal.”

DATCP’s statewide inspection results for 2016 include:

Gas Pumps	Grades of Fuel Tested	Consumer Confidence*	Total Accuracy**
	44,773	99.6%	97.8%
Price Accuracy	Items Tested		
	58,629	98.8%	96.2%
Retail Scales	Scales Inspected		
	10,772	99.7%	96.6%
Package Weight	Packages Inspected		
	100,408	98.4% (up 1.3% from 2015)	98.4%

* Percentage of time a consumer would be charged accurately or undercharged

** Includes all overcharges and undercharges



Inspectors also tested 5,743 fuel samples for quality last year. 98.8% of these samples met required standards.

When inspectors find inaccurate measurements in the field, violations are reported to store management and orders are issued to correct the problem. In 2016, DATCP inspectors:

- Conducted 844 weights and measures reinspections to ensure that accuracy corrections were made
- Rejected and required corrections on 2,135 scales and meters for inaccuracies
- Rejected 1,606 packages sold by weight for being short measure
- Ordered 707 prices corrected for ringing up inaccurately at the register

Where inspectors find repeat violations, higher level enforcement is possible. In 2016, civil forfeiture settlements totaling \$207,683 were collected from companies as a result of weights and measures inspections including:

- placing rejected short measure product back on sale
- price misrepresentations
- representing false quantity and causing a scale ticket to be incorrect

“A fair marketplace is the result of businesses diligently monitoring their prices, products and equipment and weights and measures inspectors spot checking for accuracy and ensuring compliance,” said Frassetto. “Our ability to be confident consumers relies on the best efforts of both of these parties. We are proud to find that this relationship is working and Wisconsin shoppers are being treated fairly year after year.”

For additional information or to file a weights and measures complaint, visit datcp.wi.gov, send an e-mail to datcpweightsandmeasures@wi.gov or call 608-224-4942.

Connect with us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/wiconsumer.

###