

## **At your Service**

Your local weights & measures inspector performs many inspections in an effort to protect the consumer (private and commercial) and the retailer. The inspector may be found checking the accuracy of the scale in the deli, the weight of a package in the supermarket meat counter, the gas station pumps or any other weighing or measuring device used in trade.

## **Are You Protected?**

YES! Due to the efforts of the Weights & Measures Department of the County Auditor's Office measuring devices are routinely inspected and sealed for consumer protection. The Weights & Measures Department also responds readily to Consumer Complaints. When you see a current inspection sticker you will know that the device has recently passed an inspection.

Your county Weights & Measures inspectors have received training and certification from the Ohio Department of Agriculture, Division of Weights & Measures. Inspectors must learn and pass a series of 20 lessons and 2 exams, as well as a minimum 18 hours of continuing education per year to maintain their certification.

This brochure has been prepared for you to become better acquainted with the Weights & Measures Department. If you have any

doubts on any weighing or measuring matter, please contact them. When calling with a complaint, be sure to provide the location of the device, including the register checkout number, departments or pump number and the type of gasoline purchased.

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## **PORTAGE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF WEIGHTS & MEASURES**

## **CONSUMER INFORMATION**

**JANET ESPOSITO  
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**“That Equity May Prevail”**

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## CONSUMER TIPS

### When Purchasing Gasoline.

✓Be sure that zero is indicated for amount of gallons and total of purchase before starting the pump.

✓Check the total purchase with the price per gallon and the amount of gallons pumped.

✓When possible, pump one gallon on a self serve pump and check the price against the price per gallon advertised on the pump.

✓If purchasing fuel oil or gasoline in large quantities from a metered vehicle truck, when possible, watch the meter as the fuel is pumped. This works the same as a gasoline pump. Check to see that the meter is sealed by the Weights & Measures Department or the State Department of Agriculture. If not, question why. This seal should be visible and is very important because it prevents tampering with the meter.

### When Buying By Count

#### 1. Prescription Drugs:

✓Ask the pharmacist how many pills you are supposed to get and ask him to include the amount on the label of the prescription.

✓Count the prescription and be sure that you have received the correct amount.

✓If a shortage is found, phone or return to the pharmacy and report the error immediately.

#### 2. Over the counter merchandise: (for consumers AND retailers)

✓Spot check anything that is sold by count such as medications, bottled vitamins, plastic bags, stationary, and office supplies.

## Prepackaged Commodities & Labels

Two things to know and remember

1. All prepared goods must be marked with a statement concerning net contents.

2. Net weight does not include the weight of the packaging material in which the commodity is packed.

✓When purchasing products by the pound, be sure that the person weighing it allows for the package the product is sold in. This is the tare weight. (For example: .01 lbs for a plastic bag and it does make a difference in the total price.)

✓All commodities must be sold by a definite unit of measure: weight, volume, or count.

## Scales

✓See that the net weight, price per pound, and total are on zero before the product is weighed.

✓In over the counter sales, the scales and their quantity value indicators must be in plain view of the customer.

✓Keep in mind when you are purchasing merchandise on a counter scale that the height of the person can cause a difference when reading the indicator of a scale that is not digital.

✓Merchants should check all devices for accuracy at least once a day for mechanical failure. A scale weighing 1 ounce light when weighing a product selling for \$1.00 per pound, repeated 100 times a day for one year would result in a loss of \$1,875.00 to the merchant.

✓Question the merchant if you are in doubt.  
**Please remember the merchant might not know that the scale is incorrect.**

✓Look for the current year inspection sticker on the weighing device.

✓If more than one scale of the same type are in operation, check for the number of the scale in case of a problem.

## U.P.C. Scanners

✓The Universal Product Code (U.P.C.) is used in most retail stores to scan the price of an item. The price is entered into a computer. When an item is scanned the price immediately appears on the register. The County Auditor is helping to ensure that the labeled shelf price matches the price appearing at the checkout.

## Firewood

✓When purchasing firewood, be sure to request a receipt which has the name and the address of the vendor, as well as the delivery date, amount delivered, & quantity upon which the price is based. Also, the receipt should indicate the total price.

## The Reliable Merchant

✓Wants to know that his customers are receiving full measure for their purchases.

✓Is aware that weighing and measuring devices are delicate mechanisms and can become inaccurate through constant use.

✓Realize that merchants are the largest consumer of measured goods and they too must check the accuracy of measuring devices as the consumer does to be sure they are receiving the full amount of which they have paid.

✓Should call the Weights & Measures when they suspect a device is not measuring correctly, after the device has been serviced or before a new device is put into service.