

Southern Weights & Measures Association

141th Edition

SWMA Newsletter

July 2015

JURISDICTIONAL NEWS

GEORGIA

The Fuel & Measures Division of the Georgia Department of Agriculture has had a very busy spring. One of our biggest issues has been our investigation of illegal credit card skimmers in gas pump dispensers. Several weeks back we found out about Florida's sweep looking for skimmers and they found over 100. We partnered up with the Georgia Association of Convenience Stores on a joint effort to look for illegal skimmers. Several skimmers have been found as a result and we are continuing to investigate.

On May 14 we held a Fuel Seminar at the Atlanta Farmers Market. The seminar was conducted by both our Division along with the Georgia Tank and Environmental Contractors Association. The main topic of the seminar was "maintenance of underground storage tanks". We had seen an increase in failed gasoline and diesel samples at our lab and this prompted the idea for the seminar. Over 200 were in attendance and some very good information was shared.

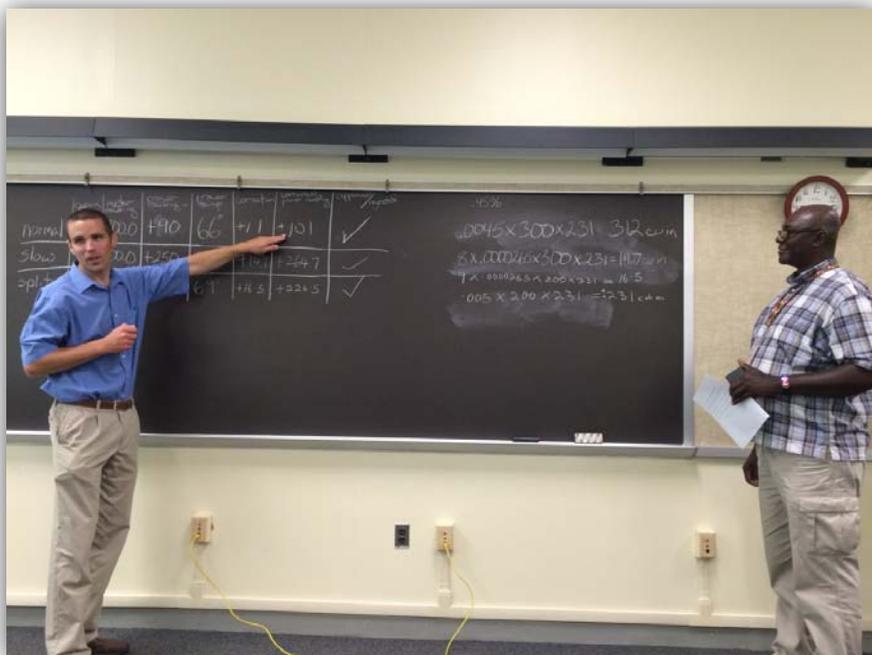
We issued several stop sale orders this spring on a number of brands of mulch. These brands failed inspection for short measure. The parent company was very cooperative and addressed the issue and fixed the problem.

We are fortunate this year to be able to acquire some new equipment. We will be getting a new 21,000 pound heavy scale test unit, a new 500 gallon test prover and trailer, and an inline CNG dispenser prover. All of our inspectors are also getting new Dell laptop computers.

Rich Lewis and Doug Killingsworth will be attending the NCWM meeting in Philadelphia, PA this summer. Doug is serving on the PDC while Rich is on the L&R committee. †

MARYLAND

The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) has launched an online system for device registration where an owner can pay registration fees by credit card or eCheck and obtain a certificate immediately. “MDA has spent the past year developing its online system to make the registration process simple and efficient,” said Weights and Measures Chief Kenneth Ramsburg. “We hope that our customers will find the new system a convenient option for online payment 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.” Maryland has a once a year registration for all weighing and measuring devices. All registrations were due on May 31, 2015. In June, MDA began contacting delinquent device owners. The collections process has a much smoother flow now with the online payment option.



Assistant Chief Joseph Eccleston and Large Capacity Scale Inspector Joseph Boako.

On June 11 and 12, MDA field inspectors came together at the main office for a training class and picnic. Assistant Chief Joe Eccleston led the class in learning all about oil VTMs. The team learned proper inspection procedures, safe operation, and proper cleaning and care of standards. The training has two goals. The first goal is to orient and establish good safety and testing practices for the field inspectors who are all working hard to inspect oil trucks. The second goal is to brush up on HB 44 in anticipation of field inspectors getting NCWM

professional certification. MDA began this year’s inspections at the end of May to complete all the meters before fall. The NCWM professional certification exam for VTMs became available at just the right time. All, staff members took the LMD VTM test and learned a lot. Field staff’s participation in training resulted in good comments and suggestions.



Picnic potluck shared by Weights and Measures staff and friends. Thanks to the motor pool staff for keeping us rolling.

Ag Supervisor Inspector Richard Tomarelli retired in April. We wish Rich, the best of luck and happy trails.

MDA is working with a field staff of 16 full-time field inspectors with two vacancies. Lab staff remains at two out of four positions. MDA is developing an 18-month plan to evaluate needs and resources to establish optimum staffing levels.

Assistant Chief Joe Eccleston is operating the NTEP measuring lab for Maryland. He has been working hard since finishing his training at the NTEP lab meeting in Sacramento, CA in March and has completed his first NTEP measuring indicator evaluation.

The NTEP weighing lab is busy and working. Belt conveyor systems are now evaluated by the MD lab after the CA lab had a retirement.

Assistant Chief Elizabeth Koncki attended the SEMAP in Tallahassee in April. Thank you to Amy Smith and the State of Florida for hosting the class. It was a great opportunity to learn from the best. Metrology lab application for accreditation has been submitted to



Rich Tomarelli and Chief Ken Ramsburg

NIST this month. MDA is prepping the lab to do Echelon III mass and small volume transfer work in eager anticipation of NIST approval.

MDA is looking forward to the Maryland State Fair, in the last days of August, which is called the "11 Best Days of Summer."

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

- On April 29, 2015, the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) received \$2,000.00 for a civil penalty assessed for price verification to CVS #4411 of Baltimore, MD 21215.
- On June 12, 2015, the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) received \$500 for a civil penalty assessed for price verification to Giant #350 of Silver Spring, MD 20904.
- On April 13, 2015, the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) received \$1,500 for a civil penalty assessed for short weight to Safeway #1089 of Gaithersburg, MD 20878.
- On June 12, 2015, the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) received \$250 for a civil penalty assessed for short weight to Giant #140 of Hyattsville, MD 20782. †

MISSISSIPPI

We should have the SWMA 2015 conference registration packet in the mail by mid-July, hopefully we can discuss committees and more at the NCWM. The dates will be October 24th – 28th at the Golden Nugget Biloxi, MS. <http://www.goldennugget.com/biloxi/> Mississippi is looking forward to hosting the annual conference.

Consumer Protection Division

Since the beginning of our state's fiscal year, July 1, 2014, our Division has collected \$2,000.00 in fines resulting from price verification inspection failures in department food stores.

From July of last year through May of this year, we have inspected 6,079 small scales in grocery stores, convenience stores, meat markets, seafood markets, and produce stands. Of those, 5,975 were found to be accurate and were approved by inspectors.

Supervisor Rick Wheeler retired from the Department at the end of May after 31 years. Rick conducted countless inspections on packages' net weight, small scales, and product price verification. He will be missed.



Rick Wheeler

Petroleum Division

The Petroleum Division has recently hired Timothy “Tim” Biles to fill a recently vacated position in the MS Delta, and includes Leflore, Holmes, Yazoo and Washington counties.

In other news, congratulations to Andrew Villar, our latest Petroleum inspector to receive certification in the area of Retail Motor Fuel Dispensing Systems through the National Conference Professional Certification Program. The division hopes to complete certification for the five remaining inspectors by FY 2017.

Administrative Penalties assessed for non-complaint fuel quality issues found in the sampling process totaled to date \$18,250 collected since July 1st.



Timothy “Tim” Biles

Weights and Measures

Connie Braswell, after 32 years of dedicated service with the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce/Weights and Measures Division director will retire on June 30, 2015. Connie has contributed a great deal of knowledge and leadership to the agency and the division. Her management skills and working knowledge of how field work and office work plays and important role in the performance of the Weights and Measures Division. During her retirement Connie will now spend her time devoted more to her family.



Connie Braswell



Randy Triplet

It saddens us to announce the retirement of Randy Triplet on June 30, 2015. Randy served as the supervisor in the North territory in the Bureau of Regulatory Services/Weights and Measures Division for the last 42 years. His wealth of knowledge, communication abilities, hard work, commitment, and dedication will be greatly missed.

Robert “Buddy” Thornton retiring after 37 years of dedicated service to the Bureau of Regulatory Services/Weights and Measures Division. Buddy worked as one of the intermediate inspectors in the northeast section of the state. Buddy’s hard work and commitment to the division has been a great asset. Congratulations to Buddy. †



Robert “Buddy” Thornton

The SWMA Newsletter is published quarterly: Annual dues are \$50.

Membership inquiries should be directed to:

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