

## Tips For the Consumer

- Watch the weighing or measuring device. Make sure it starts at zero or you may be paying for something you didn't get.
- When buying gasoline, look at the pump reading before the start of fuel delivery. The reading should be cleared and the pump set at zero before you dispense fuel.
- Check your receipts for price accuracy, especially sale items.
- Check that items weighed in front of you either have no wrapping or container, or the scale makes allowance for it. When sold by weight, all items must be sold by NET WEIGHT; the wrapping or container should not be included. This also applies to packaged items, which must indicate net weight.
- Problems with your car's performance after buying fuel should be reported to weights and measures officials immediately, ensuring the fuel from the station can be sampled and tested for quality.
- Package size may be deceptive ... remember KING SIZE, GIANT SIZE, FAMILY SIZE, etc. mean nothing. Read the label for the quantity statement. Compare prices per like units between different sizes and between different brands. Report apparent quantity discrepancies.
- If you feel you have been overcharged, tell the clerk or the store manager about it. You should also report overcharge problems to us or your county weights and measures office.

## Contact Us

Please contact the Division of Measurement Standards or your county weights and measures official to report complaints or suspected inaccuracies. Refer to the contact information provided below to reach us.

California Department of Food & Agriculture  
DIVISION OF MEASUREMENT STANDARDS

6790 Florin Perkins Road  
Suite 100  
Sacramento CA 95828  
Phone: 916-229-3000  
Fax: 916-229-3026  
Email: [dms@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:dms@cdfa.ca.gov)  
Website: <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/dms>



California Department of Food and Agriculture  
Division of Measurement Standards

## CONSUMER INFORMATION

*"Are You Getting Your Money's Worth?"*



6790 Florin Perkins Road, Suite 100  
Sacramento CA 95828  
(916) 229-3000

# Are You Getting Your Money's Worth?

## What Is Weights & Measures

It's hard to be a smart consumer these days. You think about the products you buy and the amount you can spend. Is this the best buy? Am I getting my money's worth? What assurance do I have?

Almost everything we buy is sold by weight, volume, or measure. For example, a gallon of milk, a liter of wine, a pound of hamburger, a yard of concrete, and a cord of firewood are all sold by measurement. Since we don't carry a scale or measuring equipment with us, how can we be sure a pound is a pound and a pint is a pint?

State and local government weights and measures officials work behind the scenes to protect both the buyer and the seller from malfunctioning devices or from unfair marketing practices. Because of the inspections and investigations conducted by weights and measures officials, consumers can shop with confidence.

You can be assured that the quantity you paid for was verified for accuracy by a state or local weights and measures official. Weights and measures officials check the accuracy of packaged commodities, scanning devices, meters, scales and gas pumps. We also test the quality of; gasoline, diesel fuel, motor oil, and brake fluid. These are the major and vital roles of the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Division of Measurement Standards.

Ensuring fair and honest competition for industry and accurate value comparison for consumers are the primary functions carried out by the Division of Measurement Standards working together with your local county weights and measures official.

## What We Do

*Weights and measures offers protection to the California consumer through the following programs:*

### ***Metrology***

The State Metrology Laboratory keeps and maintains the state standards of weight, volume, time, and length, which are used to determine the accuracy of weights and measures in the State of California.

### ***Petroleum***

Vehicle fuels, antifreeze, gear oil and automatic transmission fluids sold in California are tested to ensure they meet established quality standards. The advertising and labeling of these products is also regulated to ensure uniformity and fairness.

### ***Measurement Compliance***

Weighing and measuring devices such as gas pumps, scales, and scanners are inspected and tested periodically to minimize measurement errors. The quantities listed on packaged products and pricing accuracy at the checkout are verified to maintain consumer confidence.

### ***Weighmaster***

This program ensures that an official weight document used in commercial transactions is issued correctly by a licensed weighmaster. Periodic investigations verify the accuracy of the weight, measure or count stated on these documents.

### ***California Type Evaluation***

All commercial weighing and measuring devices must be evaluated, tested and approved before they can be used in California. As the only certified laboratory in the western United States, our facility serves to evaluate these devices for California manufacturers, as well as other states and countries.

## How We Can Help

*We provide assistance to the consumer by responding to and in resolving consumer complaints. Listed below are a few examples of how we can be of assistance.*



### **Deceptive Packaging**



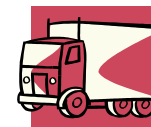
### **Contaminated Motor Vehicle Fuels**



### **Quantity Issues Involving Firewood Delivery**



### **Products Misrepresented on the Basis of Weight**



### **Household Goods Moved on the Basis of Weight**

### **Reduced Prices Not Deducted at the Register, Scanner Problems**



### **Taxi Meters**



[Kids Page](#)

