



National Conference on Weights and Measures
"That Equity May Prevail"

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NCWM Announces Weights and Measures Week: March 1-7, 2014
"Weights and Measures Officials - Making Sure the Marketplace Measures Up"

LINCOLN, Neb. – Very few Americans understand the effort that goes into assuring them that they get what they pay for with every package of food, tank of fuel, or take a trip in a taxi. How do you know the airline's baggage scale was right when they charged those extra fees? Who makes sure the farmers' grain is weighed properly when delivered from the field? The National Conference on Weights and Measures (NCWM) is using Weights and Measures Week 2014 to raise appreciation for the hard work of dedicated and highly trained regulatory officials who are working behind the scenes every day to maintain integrity in commerce.

NCWM Chair John Gaccione, Director of Westchester County, New York Weights and Measures, explains that the "buyer beware" concept is just not enough for any society to prosper. "Consumers cannot possibly protect themselves from inaccuracies in weighing and measurement," explains Gaccione. "The same applies to business owners who rely on a level playing field if they are to make an honest profit."

States are responsible for maintaining the integrity of commerce within their borders, but the infrastructure varies from state to state to meet that responsibility. For example, some states pass that authority down to the counties or even cities. Others maintain enforcement at the state level.

Gaccione emphasized the vast scope of his occupation. "Specialized equipment and training is necessary for inspecting large and small scales, meters for petroleum, natural gas, cryogenics, asphalt, and fertilizer, testing any sort of packaged commodity for net contents, sampling petroleum products and testing against ASTM standards, and much, much, more."

Even with all of that expense, the return on investment is most impressive. A survey of programs around the country revealed that the average cost per capita is about 70 cents per year. A single inspector can save businesses and consumers millions in that same time frame according to NCWM.

Weights and Measures Week is celebrated on March 1-7 each year to commemorate John Adams signing the first United States weights and measures law on March 2, 1799. Since then, there have been advancements from crude mechanical devices to highly sophisticated, software-based weighing and measuring instruments. Modern day inspectors represent a new generation of highly trained professionals who have earned their place in society, just like their predecessors.

The National Conference on Weights and Measures is a professional nonprofit association of state and local weights and measures officials, federal agencies, manufacturers, retailers and consumers. NCWM has developed national weights and measures standards since 1905. The organization brings the right interests together to keep pace with innovative advancements in the marketplace.

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