



NEWS RELEASE
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Public Service Commission Observes National Weights and Measures Week

BISMARCK, ND – The North Dakota Public Service Commission (PSC) is observing National Weights and Measures Week by educating about this important program, which ensures weights being used for commercial purposes are accurate. Weights and Measures Week is celebrated March 1-7 each year to commemorate John Adams signing the first United States weights and measures law on March 2, 1799.

For hundreds of years, government weights and measures' programs have been working behind the scenes to protect both the buyer and the seller from malfunctioning devices or from unfair practices. Inspectors use extremely accurate equipment to inspect scales, meters, scanning equipment and packaged products at supermarkets, discount and department stores, grain elevators, livestock sales rings and gasoline stations. For example, an inspector checking a gas pump would ensure that when the pump says 10 gallons, the customer actually received 10 gallons.

“North Dakota is committed to making sure commercial transactions are equitable transactions between business operators and consumers,” said Commissioner Randy Christmann, who holds the Weights and Measures portfolio for the Commission. “This is accomplished cooperatively between state inspectors and licensed private inspectors who work every day to protect consumers in North Dakota.”

Weights and measures responsibilities in the marketplace have expanded well beyond simple scales and meters and include much more than meets the eye. In addition to testing gas pumps and grocery store scales, today's weights and measures officials are responsible for regulating a sophisticated, fast moving marketplace. Their challenges include electronic and software driven devices used across numerous industries.

Weights and measures officials operate in today's marketplace to protect consumers and provide fair, equitable transactions between customers and businesses. The inspectors must also be skilled investigators. When they discover violations, they take enforcement actions against the business which may include ordering that the measuring device not be used until it is fixed or possible penalties prescribed by law.

The North Dakota Public Service Commission is a constitutionally created state agency with authority to permit, site and regulate certain business activities in the state including electric and gas utilities, telecommunications companies, power plants, electric transmission lines, pipelines, railroads, grain elevators, auctioneers, commercial weighing devices, pipeline safety and coal mine reclamation. For more information, contact the Public Service Commission at (701) 328-2400 or www.psc.nd.gov.

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