The National Conference on Weights and Measures: Metric in the Marketplace

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What is the NCWM?

The NCWM is a standards-development organization for the weights and measures regulatory agencies of U.S. states, counties and cities as well as Federal agencies.
What is the NCWM?

♣ The NCWM also works with foreign national and international groups to foster uniformity in weights and measures requirements and to facilitate trade.
The purpose of the NCWM

To bring together government officials and representatives of business, industry, trade associations and consumer organizations to hear and discuss subjects that relate to the weights and measures field.
The purpose of the NCWM

- To develop and recommend laws and regulations, technical codes for weights and measures devices used in commerce, test methods, enforcement procedures and administrative guidelines.
Handbooks = model standards, laws, and regulations developed for adoption by State and Local jurisdictions and Federal Agencies
Most States adopt NCWM Recommendations

- 41 States automatically adopt NIST Handbook 44
- All 50 states adopt some version of Handbook 44
- 46 States have adopted variations or sections of NIST Handbook 130, in particular, “The Uniform Packaging and Labeling Regulation”
NCWM Efforts for Metric Use

*Revised all Handbooks to eliminate barriers to the use of the metric system in the marketplace.*

*Revised requirements to address packers and retailers concerns over pricing, package sizes, and labeling requirements.*
SPECIFICATIONS,
TOLERANCES, AND
OTHER TECHNICAL
REQUIREMENTS FOR
WEIGHING AND
MEASURING DEVICES

as adopted by the 66th
National Conference on
Weights and Measures 2007

NIST
Handbook 44
2002
NCWM Publications

♣ NIST Handbook 44 “Specifications, Tolerances and Other Technical Requirements for Weighing and Measuring Devices”
Allows retailers to use either metric or inch-pound units (e.g., grams kilograms or pounds or ounces)
Price per unit of weight:

- Allows scales to compute total price using price-per-kilogram or price-per-100 grams.

If the product is $7.69 per-pound then:

- Per kg = $16.95
- Per 100 grams = $1.69
NCWM Publications

- NIST Handbook 130 Uniform Laws and Regulations
- Uniform Packaging and Labeling Regulation
- Uniform Regulation for the Method of Sale of Commodities
- Uniform Unit Pricing Regulation
NIST Handbook 130 “Uniform Laws and Regulations….”

✦ Packaging and Labeling Regulation

✦ Consistent with federal regulations on labeling requirements (e.g., type size, contrast, placement, and symbols).

✦ Requires metric and inch-pound units on consumer packages under both state/federal jurisdiction.

✦ Since 1999, consumer packages under state jurisdiction may be labeled with only metric units (showing inch-pound units is optional).
States that allow Metric Only Labeling
Method of Sale of Commodities Regulation

- Requires that products be sold by weight or measure using either metric or inch-pound units.

- Since 1994, standardized package sizes have been eliminated for: bread, milk, flour, corn meal, hominy grits, butter, yogurt, margarine and other spreads, cottage cheese, and sour cream.
Uniform Unit Pricing Regulation

The declaration of unit price of a commodity shall be uniformly and consistently expressed as a price per unit of measure.

- Weight: kg or 100 g, pound or ounce

- Fluid: liter or 100 mL or gallon, quart, pint or fluid ounce
Uniform Unit Pricing Regulation

- Dry measure: liter or 100 mL or dry quart or dry pint
- Length: meter, decimeter, centimeter or yard, foot, or inch
- Area: square - meter, decimeter, centimeter or square – yard, foot, or inch
NCWM Publications

lâ€œ NIST Handbook 133 Checking the Net Contents of Packaged Goods
NIST Handbook 133 “Checking the Net Contents of Packaged Goods”

♦ Includes procedures for verifying the declared net contents of any type of package labeled by weight, measure (e.g., volume, length, area), or count.

♦ Inspectors verify the largest of the declared quantities.

Net Wt 1 lb (454 g)

1 lb = 453.592 4
Contact the NCWM

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