

WEIGHTS & MEASURES CONNECTION



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Inside this Issue

	Page
We Have a New Look	1
This Month in History	1
Package and Labeling Instruction Training School	2
Calendar	2

This Month in History

This month highlights President's Day, which falls on February 15th. This holiday has been designated as President's Day since 1971 when President Nixon combined Washington and Lincoln's birthdays into a single observed holiday. The federal government celebrates President's Day on the third Monday in February granting all federal employees a three-day weekend holiday.

Prior to the combined holiday, Presidents Lincoln and Washington, each had their own separate holidays. While President Lincoln's birthday on February 12th was not honored as a federal holiday, many states recognized the day and adopted it as a legal holiday. President Washington's birthday was February 22nd. In 1968 Congressional legislation changed the federal holiday to fall on a Monday to create a three-day weekend. Then later in 1971 the official celebration of these two great men in history as well as those who have served as president since are honored on President's Day.

We Have a New Look!

Dear Readers,

Today is the launch of the NIST Weights and Measures Division's new periodical *Weights and Measures Connection*. For many years, our readers have faithfully read the *Weight and Measures Quarterly* newsletter. Like most organizations today, we are reinventing ourselves by updating the design and objectives of our newsletter in an attempt to bring you better and more timely topics in the field of weights and measures.

In the past, the *Weights and Measures Quarterly* was published four times a year with articles touching on laboratory metrology, devices, package and labeling, training, breaking technologies, and an occasional human interest item. The newsletter had a tendency to get rather long because we had so much information to share. The Weights and Measures Division is breaking away from traditions established in our former newsletter by introducing our new look with the goal to provide timely, useful information in smaller bites. The NEW *Weights and Measures Connection* will contain fewer articles per issue; however, it will be produced on a more frequent basis. This will enable us to get the information to our readers, but also make it easier for the reader to pick and choose what they wish to read.

The publication will still contain articles relative to the weights and measures community, and a calendar of meetings and training opportunities. We invite our readers to contact us with suggestions for articles, questions on weights and measures issues, and calendar notices. Article suggestions and feedback on our "new" look can be directed to the editor, Linda Crown at Linda.Crown@nist.gov.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES WEEK

MARCH 1 - 7

Use this as an opportunity to educate the public!

Packaging and Labeling Instructor Training School

By David Sefcik

Instructor Training

On September 14 - 18, 2009, the Laws and Metric Group of the Weights and Measures Division (WMD) hosted a week long instructor training school at NIST's Gaithersburg, Maryland, campus. Participants were provided specialized training on packaging and labeling laws and regulations as outlined in NIST Handbook 130, *Uniform Laws and Regulations in the area of Legal Metrology and Engine Fuel Quality*.

The school was attended by nine participants from around the country, which included state weights and measures officials from California, Maryland, Nebraska, North Carolina, and Wisconsin. Industry members from Bureau Veritas, Procter and Gamble, and Walmart also attended.

The class focused on the Uniform Packaging and Labeling Regulations (UPLR) as found in NIST HB 130 for consumer and non-consumer packaging requirements; FDA and FTC requirements, and other federal laws and regulations governing packaging and labeling as it pertains to the declaration of identity, responsibility, and quantity. The class consisted of classroom training, hands on examinations of products in the marketplace, a review and study of recent court cases, and a trip to a store to apply and re-enforce classroom training.

These instructors will take the training they received and use it to teach other state officials with the goal of improving compliance in the marketplace and protecting consumers and businesses. The industry participants will work toward better educating and training their employees and suppliers to ensure labeling compliance on the products they carry.

Current Inspection Practices

For many reasons, the inspection and enforcement of packaging and labeling regulations has declined over the years. Most states inspect net quantity compliance but may not inspect for declaration of identity, responsibility, and quantity. The reduction in enforcement has proliferate into wide-spread abuse, whether intentional or due to lack of industry's knowledge, and education.

(continued page 3)

Calendar 2010

February 24 - 25
NCWM - NTETC Belt-Coveyor Scale Sector Meeting

March 1 - 12
Basic Metrology - States

March 2 - 3
NCWM - NTETC Software Sector Meeting

March 22 - 26
Measurement Science Conference

April 12 - 16
SEMAPP

May 3 - 7
WRAP

May 10 - 13
Northeastern Weights & Measures Association - Annual Meeting

May 16 - 17
Central Weights & Measures Association Annual Meeting

May 17 - 21
Basic Mass - Industry

June 22 - 26
Laboratory Administration Seminar

July 11 - 15
NCWM 95th Annual Meeting

July 25 - 29
NCSL International Workshop & Symposium

August 25 - 26
NCWM - NTETC Grain Analyzer Sector Meeting

August 31
NCWM - NTETC Weighing Sector Meeting

September 12 - 15
Central Weights & Measures Association Interim Meeting

September 13 - 17
NEMAPP

September 19 - 24
CIML 2010 Meeting

Recommendation

When checking packages for net quantity, weights and measures inspectors can include the checking and verification of the declaration of identity, responsibility, and quantity into existing inspection procedures. Inspectors will find that once properly trained and experienced in the field, little additional time and effort is required to perform a packaging and labeling check. This check may include but is not limited to assuring:

- Product identity is on the principal display panel (PDP) which accurately describes the contents (not misleading or deceptive).
- A conspicuous declaration of responsibility is provided containing the name and address of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor (the street address can only be omitted if it is shown in a current city telephone directory).
- The net quantity declaration consists of the proper location (lower 30 % of PDP), size and style of type or lettering (based on size of PDP), color contrast, unit of measure requirements, and free area as outlined in the UPLR.

Upcoming Training Opportunities

WMD is planning two inspector training classes in 2010. One is tentatively planned for April in Nebraska, and the second is tentatively scheduled for early summer in the northeastern region. We will be announcing specific information regarding the classes to all state directors as soon as the information is available.

Any comments, questions, or concerns can be addressed to *David Sefcik* at dsefcik@nist.gov or 301-975-4868, or *Lisa Warfield* at Lisa.Warfield@nist.gov or 301-975-3308.

In the Field

Is there a W&M topic that you would like to have appear in the *Weights and Measures Connection*?

How can we better serve our W&M community?

Do you have a safety tidbit to share?

Do you have a W&M event that you wish to post in the *Connection's* calendar?

Submissions can be sent to the Editor, Linda Crown at Linda.Crown@nist.gov

September 26 - 30
Western Weights & Measures Association

October 1 - 2
NCWM - NTETC Measuring Sector Meeting

October 3 - 6
Southern Weights & Measures Association

October 13 - 14
Northeastern Weights & Measures Association
Interim Meeting

Calendar 2011

January 23 - 26
NCWM 96th Interim Meeting

Additional details on the above calendar items can be found at:

<http://ts.nist.gov/WeightsAndMeasures/calendar3.cfm>