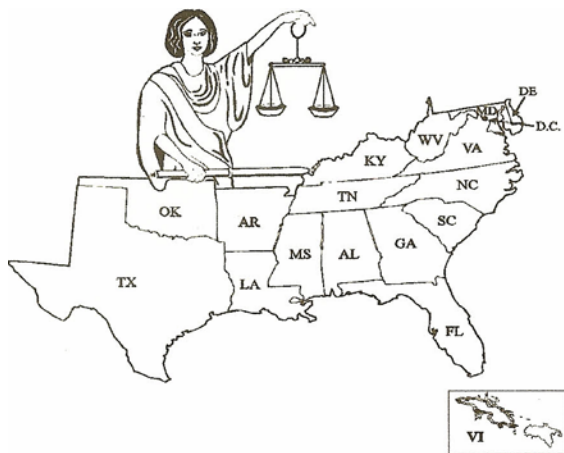


Southern Weights & Measures Association



143rd Edition

SWMA Newsletter

January 2016

JURISDICTIONAL NEWS

FLORIDA

This year the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Bureau of Standards conducted a statewide sweep of all gas stations looking for illegal credit card skimmers. In all, inspectors visited more than 8,000 stations statewide and opened petroleum dispensers checking for illegal skimming devices. To date 165 skimmers have been found and removed from dispensers across Florida.



A skimmer (an example pictured at left) is a device used to steal information from your credit or debit card. Thieves will often place skimmers inside motor fuel dispensers at night when the station is closed or they will sometimes block the station attendant's view and then place the skimmer inside the dispenser. Most of these skimmers must be retrieved to download the stored information, but the newest skimmers employ Bluetooth technology and they need not be removed from the dispenser to retrieve the stolen information. These advanced skimmers are capable of transmitting

stolen information essentially until they experience a loss of power or are removed from the dispenser.

Skimmers have to be attached to the card reader in some fashion and can exist in many different forms. We have found in most cases that thieves will plug the skimmer (pictured above) into the ribbon cable that runs from the card reader to the dispenser's motherboard. Often, they will try to hide this skimmer and cable under other electronic boards and wiring but less sophisticated criminals will leave the skimmer openly attached to the card reader, which makes it much easier to detect. Some of the newer skimmers are attached to the card reader itself to make it harder to detect (pictured at right), but others have appeared in different forms not pictured here.



The estimated economic damage to consumers is dependent upon the number of credit card numbers obtained on each skimmer, which is a function of how long the skimmer has been in the dispenser combined with station traffic during the time the skimmer is active. Our estimates indicate that the 165 skimming devices removed from dispensers in Florida have avoided more than \$18 Million in economic damage and loss to consumers.

Additionally, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is proposing legislation this year that if passed will require gas stations to have some form of additional security measures in place to hinder access to the credit card processing systems in motor fuel dispensers; increase enforcement authority against those who possess or traffic fraudulent credit cards; reclassify the crime of unlawful conveyance of fuel, which increases the maximum sentence; and increase the offense level of the crime.

How can you further help protect yourself when purchasing motor fuels?

- Pay with cash.
- If possible, use a credit card instead of debit.
- If you have to use a debit card, run it as a credit card.
- Try to avoid the far outside pumps.
- Try to avoid pumps that cannot be seen by the station attendant. 🚧

GEORGIA

Season greetings from Georgia!! It has been a busy year for our Division; we have crossed some bridges that we have never crossed before. Along with everything else that we regulate, we've started testing cotton spindle grease meters this year. We also have taken over the mobile fuel lab again from the Lab Division and are currently testing samples from all the terminals in the state. We have over 20 CNG and LNG sites being operated in the state currently with plans of 20 to 30 more being built.

We have been able to purchase new equipment this year including a 500 gal. prover with trailer, retail fuel slip-in unit, CNG testing unit and a new large scale test unit. We are very thankful to have these new items especially the new large scale unit, the one that it replaced was not going to pass another annual crane inspection.

Over the last two years we have been able to replace many of our older vehicles, but we still have a few that need replacing. Hopefully we will get to do this next year, along with more equipment purchases. We are fine in personnel except for a Field Supervisor position that we hope to fill soon.

With that being said, we would like to congratulate Steve Brannon on his recent retirement, Steve was our North Ga. Senior Field Supervisor. He had served the State of Georgia for 35 years and we would like to say thank you for your service. We would also like to congratulate Cedric Lloyd on his recent promotion to Senior Field Supervisor.

We would again like to thank Gene Robertson and his staff for their hospitality in hosting the SWMA Conference in Mississippi this year, it was a great meeting. We would also like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Thanks,

Rich Lewis

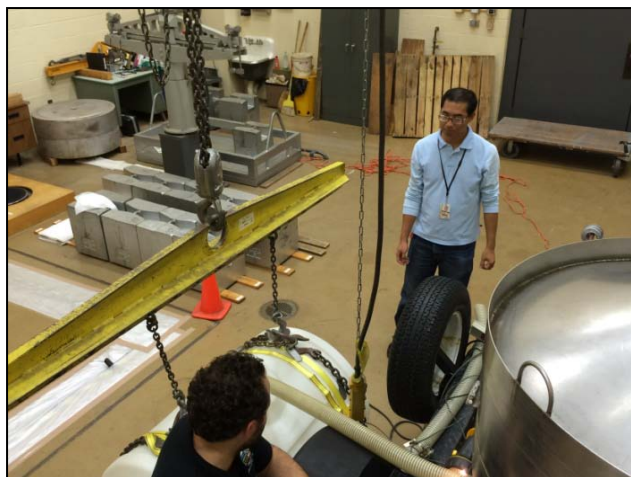
Doug Killingsworth

MARYLAND

While the end of the year normally brings cold weather, it seems as though Mother Nature is taking it easy on us this year. Mild weather has allowed most of our inspectors to continue inspecting gas stations before they migrate inside to perform scale inspections, package work and price verifications during the winter months. We are also in the process of wrapping up inspections on oil and propane trucks so that our provers can be stored for the winter. Special thanks to Field Supervisor Don Mason who stepped up this year to inspect all of the propane trucks in central Maryland while we are short handed. It had been a few years since Don had inspected propane meters, but he was back in the saddle in no time at all. Thank you Don!



Work has recently begun on a new HVAC system in our small volume laboratory, where our metrology team performs calibrations on smaller standards such as 5 gallon volumetric provers. Once the new HVAC system is completed in this lab, we will have three labs finished: small mass, intermediate mass and small volume. Our next step will be to upgrade the HVAC in our large mass and large volume laboratories.



Zach Tripoulas and Tong Hsu have been busy completing volumetric and gravimetric proficiency testing on a 100 gallon prover from NIST. Tong recently completed the Intermediate Mass Seminar at NIST and Zach has been working hard as we attempt to regain accreditation so that our metrology laboratory can be fully operational once again.

On December 17, we will be having our annual Holiday Meeting and luncheon for current and retired staff. This year we will have a special guest speaker from the Secret Service here to educate our inspectors on credit card skimmers found in gas pumps. We are looking forward to this presentation with hopes of educating our field inspectors on how to locate these devices and the proper procedures to follow should they come across a credit card skimmer while in the field. This presentation will be followed by our famous pot luck lunch. Everyone looks forward to the abundance of delicious food to enjoy while conversing with good friends, old and new.

Here's to hoping that everyone gets off to a great start in the New Year. 🍀

MISSISSIPPI

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce was proud to host the 70th Annual Meeting of the Southern Weights and Measures Association. I want to thank my staff, the committee chairman, speakers and presiding officers for their efforts in what I hope all that attended considered a successful meeting. The business of the SWMA was handled efficiently and there was time for the attendees to mingle and enjoy a little of what our Mississippi Gulf Coast had to offer. Gene Robertson, Immediate Past President.

Consumer Protection Division:

Prior to Thanksgiving Day, Inspectors from the Consumer Protection Division make annual inspections on holiday food items, such as turkeys, hams, ducks, and hens to ensure that consumers do not over-pay for seasonal foods sold by weight.

This year, the Consumer Protection Division made efforts to educate retail stores in advance of these types of inspections. Letters were mailed out and Inspectors made in-store visits to explain the importance of accounting

for tare and how the Department would be making inspections. By educating stores on these practices, stores were able to reduce potential errors.

In total, Inspectors performed 1,065 inspections on lots of holiday meat items. Of those lots, 140 were found to contain tare errors. Those foods were placed off-sale and reweighed with the correct tare.

Weights and Measures Division:

Currently, the Weights and Measures Division has hired one intermediate scales capacity inspector and two heavy scales capacity inspectors.

The new hires are as follows: Charles Champagne joined the Weights and Measures Division on October 8, 2015. He will be testing intermediate scales capacity in the southwest area of the state. Joshua Hinton joined the Weights and Measures Division on October 14, 2015. He will be testing heavy capacity scales in the southern area of the state. Jason Lancaster joined the Weights and Measures Division on October 1, 2015. He will be testing heavy capacity scales and cattle scales in the northern area of the state. Will McNesse, one of our current heavy capacity inspectors, will take over the responsibilities of testing cattle scales in the south and testing dairy tanks statewide.



Charles Champagne



Joshua Hinton



Jason Lancaster



Will McNesse

A few pictures for the 70th Annual Southern Weights and Measures Conference. 📷





NORTH CAROLINA

Standards Laboratory

The last quarter of the year is usually a slow time for Standards Laboratory. We have our annual State fair going on from October 15 – 25, 2015 at our local fairgrounds. The theme for the fair was “Nothing Could Be Finer”. Some of our area inspectors participate including the Standards Laboratory staff. Metrologist Van Hyder was the coordinator for this year’s fair display for the Standards Division.

Our newest metrologist, Nick Cercone attended the Mass Metrology seminar held on the NIST campus in Gaithersburg, Maryland from October 26 – November 6, 2015. Our senior metrologist, Van Hyder attended the Mettler Metrology Symposium in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on November 3-4, 2015. Van presented the State Laboratory Program Workload Survey to attendees. It was a great opportunity to educate people about state laboratory programs.

The grain moisture program ended the 2015 harvest with a less than average quality soybean crop. While finding crop samples for the 2016 inspection year was difficult, we were able to find enough adequate samples of all crops being tested. We look forward to training a new inspector and being fully staffed to begin the 2016 inspection year.

Sharon Woodard

LP-Gas Section

We named LP-Gas Inspector Randy Renfrow to be the new Acting Field Supervisor for the inspectors in August. Richard Fredenburg, LP-Gas Engineer, was assigned compliance officer duties in August, which are still being defined.

Richard attended three committee meetings. He went to Minneapolis in August for the *LP-Gas Code* committee, to Kansas City in September for the NPGA TS&S Committee, and again to Minneapolis in October for the *Utility LP-Gas Plant Code* committee.

Inspections of propane tank installations for food vendors at the State Fair and Mountain State Fair continued this year. We performed 335 inspections at the Mountain State Fair with a team of inspectors, due the continued absence of James Lambert for medical issues. We performed 2098 inspections before and during State Fair.

There were two significant car fires, one with personal injury, attributed to problems associated with filling propane cylinders and loading them into vehicles in August and September. Some inspection techniques are being modified to increase the emphasis to dispenser operators for following their training.

The fire protection analysis guidelines we developed for propane tanks that are enclosed or covered continue to be revised. We are looking at a possible method for dealing with the discharge from relief valves where the tanks are covered or partially covered.

Richard Fredenburg

Weights and Measures

We have been able to fill some of our vacant positions. We would like to welcome Harin Amin, Gasoline & Oil Inspector, and Clay McIntyre, Dual Role Inspector. We have several long time employees that have announced their retirement plans so we will have several more vacancies within the next quarter. Danny Stillwell, large meter calibrator, retired at the end of December. Also, Frank Wilson, a very dedicated employee and hard worker lost his battle with cancer and will be missed by the whole department.

Hunter Hairr and Rick LaMountain took the Retail Motor Fuel Dispenser exam and received their certificates. We are in the early stages of having all of our inspectors take the appropriate exams. I think that this will have a very positive effect for our section. In the future we would like to require service technicians to take the NCWM's Professional Certification Exams and may get better buy in to the idea by having the inspectors take it as well.

With the planning that we did in 2015 our new year looks like it will be great one. Hopefully, in 2016 all work will go smoothly and all challenges will be met.

Allen Katalinic

Motor Fuels Laboratory

The Motor Fuels section is starting to work towards developing a more robust quality management system that is based on the tenets of ISO 17025. As a part of this effort, staff from the Food and Drug Protection Division have worked with the laboratory staff and administration to identify areas for improvement in the current management system. These efforts were recently discussed at the annual all staff safety meeting in November. This will be a multi-year project and will encompass all aspects of the section's daily operations. In addition, the bidding for the new sample vault for the laboratory should conclude by the end of the month and hopefully construction can begin at the start of the New Year. This new storage area will help improve the current work flow for the laboratory staff while also addressing several safety issues.

Laboratory Supervisor Melissa Spencer recently traveled to Austin, Texas to represent our Section at the winter meeting of ASTM D02 Section on Petroleum Products, Liquid Fuels and Lubricants. During this meeting, Melissa voted on several key issues in subcommittee A that directly affect the motor fuels in our state. On a sad note, at the end of December the Motor Fuels Section will bid farewell to inspector George Harrill who has been the covering the southwestern region of the state for the past five years. George is leaving us for retirement and we wish him the best in his future endeavors. Chemist Nick Renck also left the section in early December to pursue a position in private industry.

Marcus Helfrich ✉

The SWMA Newsletter is published quarterly: Annual dues are \$50.

Membership inquires should be directed to:

N. David Smith, SWMA Secretary-Treasurer, NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, 1001
Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1001 Phone: 919-707-3031 Fax: 919-715-0026 E-Mail:
David.Smith@ncagr.gov, Website: <http://www.swma.org/> News may be submitted to: SWMA, 1904
Mission Road, Birmingham, AL 35216, E-mail: wdbasher@charter.net

SWMA Newsletter
1904 Mission Road
Birmingham, AL 35216
