

Southern Weights & Measures Association

156th Edition

SWMA Newsletter

April 2019

JURISDICTIONAL NEWS

ARKANSAS

“Things change. And friends leave. Life doesn’t stop for anybody.” **Stephen Chbosky**

This particularly holds true for the Arkansas Bureau of Standards.

Nikhil Soman is now the new director of the Bureau of Standards. **Nikhil** has been the lab manager of the State Standards Lab for eight years. Under his guidance our lab is now on a two-year certification cycle for the first time in years.

Metrologist **Eva Ramirez** took another step in her lab training by attending the March session of “Fundamentals of Metrology. She said “It was very helpful and re-enforced some of the concepts that **Nikhil** and **Houston** had taught her.” 🏹

FLORIDA

The new petroleum lab in Pompano Beach is complete and we are occupying it! We are in the process of finishing up the installation of all the new equipment and will be running samples soon. This lab will be analyzing brake fluid and antifreeze in addition to petroleum, the added space makes this lab especially convenient for multiple operations.

The Florida Legislature is in session and we are hoping that our funding requests will make it through the process without cuts. Some of our older large and medium test trucks are in dire need of replacement as well as several pickup trucks used in other inspection activities.

Skimmers continue to be a problem for consumers conducting point of sale transactions at the gas pump in Florida. More than 1,200 of the devices were removed by weights and measures inspectors in 2018 and more than 350 already since January 1, 2019.

The Florida Legislature just legalized smokable medical marijuana. There are no requirements for method of sale or minimum requirements for scales in the legislation, so the Bureau of Standards is drafting requirements through rulemaking.

We currently have three vacancies in the petroleum labs and three field inspector vacancies with six additional new hires about to start. With the upturn in the economy we continue to struggle with high turnover and the lack of qualified applicants. †

GEORGIA

Spring is quickly approaching, but this morning there was frost on top of my car, you know what they say in Georgia if you don't like the weather just hang around a few days and you will. We already have corn coming up in our fields across the State and many crops will follow. With that being said, most of our large and small-scale folks are busy checking seasonal scales. Before we go any further, we want to mention our long term Director **Rich Lewis** has retired. He made the decision final on January 31st, 2019. **Rich** started his new part-time consulting job with the Market Division on March 4th, 2019 and we want to wish him the very best. He is missed by all.

Doug Killingsworth has been promoted to Director of the Fuel and Measures Division. **Doug** has been with the Department for twenty five years and has been with Fuel and Measures for twenty four years. He has held many positions in the division from Ag. Inspector to Asst. Director of Operations. We have promoted Program Manager **Cedric Lloyd** to Deputy Director to fill **Doug's** former position. We also have just hired a new Admin. Asst. for our office, her name is **Tania Rios** and we want to welcome **Tania** to our office staff. We will be hiring a new field supervisor in the coming weeks and we will be fully staffed again.

Program Manager **Mike Stafford**, which is also our CNG expert has started testing CNG and LNG locations around the state. Supervisors **John Bentley** and **Mark Andrews**, along with their other duties, also help **Mike** with this testing. We are extremely blessed to have such multi-talented Supervisors. The Retail Fuel Inspectors have been receiving some new equipment for their units. We are changing our units from the old camper tops to the new prover covers and tool boxes. We hope to have all units changed over by the end of our next fiscal year.

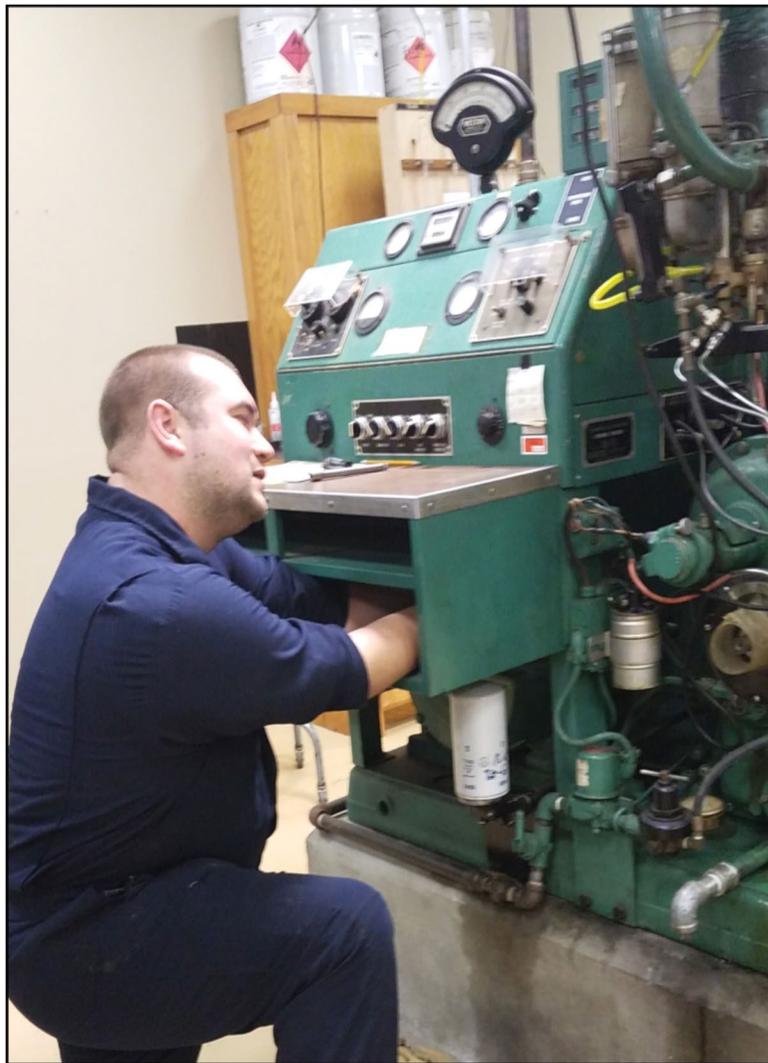
Our LPG Inspectors are enjoying the new twenty gallon retail testing unit. We had to get a few bugs out of it, but it seems to be working well now. The Small-Scale Inspectors are also enjoying the swap to all twenty five pound weights for testing. We should be receiving two new large-scale test units this summer and we will certainly have four happy Large-Scale Inspectors. This will be the last two to be replaced from a much overdue fleet.

Thanks to all our staff,

Doug †

LOUISIANA

Fuel Program- Our two octane engines (1970's models) are being upgraded and we are trading in an old cetane engine for credit. They are being retrofitted with XCP digital control panels. This will make our octane engines much more user friendly and consistent from operator to operator. The new carburetors that will be outfitted on the engines will allow us to use the falling level procedure and will enhance productivity by becoming semi-automatic, therefore, significantly reducing operator involvement and potential error.



Octane engine before upgrade/overhaul by Compass Instruments.



Octane engine after upgrade/overhaul by Compass Instruments.

Device and Package Program- We have continued our efforts to create a comprehensive Field Training Manual along with assessments, which will synthesize NIST Handbooks and Louisiana Laws, Rules, and Regulations, so that we can more easily and thoroughly train our inspectors. The latest course to drop is Weighing Devices, in which inspectors can learn all they need to know about inspecting, testing, and regulating scales in Louisiana. We are beginning the process of upgrading our inspectors package inspection scales, and have started an initiative to greatly increase the amount of packaged goods we inspect each year.

Metrology- Our newly hired metrologist in training recently passed her NIST Fundamentals class and will be attending Mass training in April. We are adding a second position and that hire will begin OTJ and NIST training when on-boarded. Our philosophy is to work with Louisiana Civil Service and train our own metrologists as well as enhance our ability to recruit an on-board accredited metrologists as well. A metrologist working title has been approved and higher salaries for both methodologies mentioned above.

Heavy Duty (HD) Program- We have a new test truck being built in West Virginia and have hired a new HD inspector who has 30 plus years of experience in the industry. This brings us up to four HD inspectors state wide and will allow us to be more efficient in getting this critical work completed annually.



One of our three current HD test trucks.

Professional Development- As part of our Professional Development efforts, our inspectors and middle managers are continuing to take the NCWM Exams. Team members have passed 14 Basic Competency Certifications, and three have earned one Professional Competency Certification. Our goal is for all team members to achieve as well as maintain at least one NCWM credential.

Made available by:

Bobby H. Fletcher, Jr., PhD

Director, Weights and Measures Louisiana
Department of Agriculture and Forestry 🇺🇸

NORTH CAROLINA

Standards Division

Our future home, the Agricultural Sciences Center (ASC) is coming along. The building is about 220,000 square feet of labs and office space. In addition to our division, our Food & Drug, Veterinary and Structural Pest and Pesticides divisions will all be in the building as well. The structural steel is almost complete on the administration wing of the building, with the metrology lab on the ground floor. So far, we are on budget and just a few days behind schedule (lot of rain here the last several months) with the opening still planned for November 1, 2020. Here's a link to the webcams on site if you are curious, there is a time lapse feature. <https://app.oxblue.com/open/jedunn/NCagricultural>

Standards Laboratory

The first of the year is always a busy time of the year for us. We reserve this time on our schedule to have our working standards calibrate and to get ready for customer calibrations. This year was the first time in quite a while we were able to begin customer calibrations by February 1st. I applaud the efforts of our metrologists (**Van Hyder, Ashley Lessard, Marina Paggen and Robert Rogers**) for a job well done.

Again, this year, **Van Hyder**, will serve as chairman for the Legal Metrology committee by NCSLI. We look forward to the many opportunities and contributions **Van** will make to enhance the legal metrology world.

After a three-month vacancy at the metrologist I position, **Joshua Hairston** has agreed to come on board. He began his state agency employment on February 25, 2019. He has a bachelor's degree in mathematics and a master's degree in mathematical sciences. We look forward to the many contributions **Joshua** will make to our laboratory.

Training for this quarter included: **Robert Rogers** attended a three (3) day NCSLI Technical Exchange on February 25– 28, in Orlando, Florida; **Joshua Hairston** attended Fundamentals of Metrology on March 11-15 in Gaithersburg, Maryland and **Robert Rogers** attended a two (2) day A2LA conference in Reston, Virginia.

In safety news, we will continue to participate in the Carolina Star Program. Our safety team representatives for this year are **Van Hyder** and **Sharon Woodard**. I believe they will do an excellent job keeping us informed of the many changes in the safety community. We have made the commitment to abide by the common goal of keeping safety first.

Our Grain Moisture section is in the height of its inspection season. The inspections are going well, and we expect to have all inspections completed before the beginning of wheat harvest. We expect a smaller wheat crop across the state this year. We are looking forward to warmer weather as we finish our inspections.

Sharon Woodard

Motor Fuels Laboratory

The Motor Fuels field inspectors have been very busy over the last three months following up on consumer complaints that were generated by several recent news stories regarding the Section's work. To date, one hundred and five consumer complaints regarding the quality of motor fuels sold in North Carolina have been received; over twice the number received by this time last year.

In the Motor Fuels laboratory, the staff remain focused on preparing for the future move to the new Agricultural Sciences Center in late 2020. Laboratory Supervisor **Melissa Spencer** has been focusing her

attention, over the last three months, on developing documentation that will be the basis of the laboratory's new quality management system.

At the same time, laboratory administration continues to work with Division System Analyst **Susan Myrick** and programmers from the Department's Emergency Programs Division to complete the development of the electronic inspection portal. We hope to have this portal up and running in the next few months. In addition to the field and lab data entries, follow-up inspections, complaints and dispositions on condemned samples would also be tracked in the system.

Dr. Marcus Helfrich

LP-Gas Section

We have been presented a couple of challenges recently that don't fit into the scenarios in the *LP-Gas Code*. One is where an industry makes plastic foam using, usually, unodorized butane or isobutane as a blowing agent. There are concerns about pumping the liquid into a building and how to deal with the gas released in the building after extrusion. The other challenge is present at some sites where they blend butane into gasoline during the winter to increase the vapor pressure. Some places use an alternative to hydrostatic relief valves where liquid can be trapped between shutoff valves. The relief method is acceptable, but there are isolation valves that are in clear violation of the *LP-Gas Code* requirements for relief valves.

We interviewed for a new LP-Gas Inspector in March. This is to fill a position in the region left vacant when **Shane Todd** left us to go to another state position.

The National Propane Gas Association Technology, Standards, and Safety Committee met in Oklahoma City March 10-12. **Richard Fredenburg**, our LP-Gas Engineer, participated. Most of the work was to consider the need for changes to various codes, including the *LP-Gas Code*, 2023 edition.

The North Carolina Propane Gas Association had their quarterly board of directors and general meeting in Raleigh on March 19. **Carl Spruill**, Field Supervisor for the LP-Gas Inspectors, and **Richard Fredenburg** attended.

Richard Fredenburg taught a class at the North Carolina Fire Prevention School in Carolina Beach on March 22 about how the *LP-Gas Code* and the *Fire Prevention Code*, and the teams that enforce them, work together to try to keep the propane industry and consumers safe.

Richard Fredenburg

Measurement Section

The first quarter here was rather busy, and that's always welcomed. We finished up most our seasonal inspections with fertilizer and mulch with just a few re-checks needed in the future. The last week in

March we held our annual meeting of our weights and measures staff. Everything went smooth and I would like to thank our supervisors and trainers for their hard work. We always look forward to seeing all our staff around the state this time of year.

As always, our staff is constantly growing and changing. **Ryan Coffield** took a promotion into our new standards III dual role position. Also moving into our dual role positions are **Jody Desourdy**, and **James Varble**. All three have been great inspectors and I am glad they have the opportunity to further their careers. We did have one new hire this quarter. I would like to welcome **Joe Chandler** to our weights and measures team. He is our new fuel dispenser inspector near the Charlotte area. He comes with plenty of experience in the fuel business and public relations.

We received our calibrator test truck this past quarter and our inspector **Tim Quinn** is putting it to good use. Just as quickly we got that unit back, we put another calibrator truck into the shop to be updated. You need good equipment if you are going to do good work.

Y'all be good, God Bless,

Chad Parker 🇺🇸

MARYLAND

On behalf of us in the state of Maryland, we would like to offer our condolences to the family and friends of **Jim Truex** and to all his fellow Ohio Associates. He will always be remembered as a true friend and a weights and measures colleague. He will be greatly be missed.

Metrology:

We continue to improve the environment control systems found in our two remaining metrology labs. The Air Handler in our large mass laboratory has been recently repaired and we are now working on supplemental humidification. Recently, we accepted a bid to upgrade the air handler with a Scully System that was installed last month.

Next, we are working on a water treatment system that supplies water to three independent Liebert systems. Currently, county water is causing scaling and sediment deposits in the Liebert canisters increasing their rate of replacement.

Awaiting at DGS is a bid for solicitation to purchase and replace our present 3800 gal. Steel Water Storage Tank found in the large volume laboratory.

Staffing:

Presently, we are working on one (one and only one) vacant field inspector position. Otherwise all program positions are filled. Please give a warm welcome to **Jermaine Hawkins** who is the program Measuring

Administrator and **Shaun Jackson** who is our Administrative Assistant. In the field we have hired the following 6 inspectors in the last year; **Tom Cugle, Wayne Early, Jeannette George, Eric Richardson, Hannah Seaton** and **Alison Wilkinson**.

Training:

On Feb. 20 and 21 we had an in-house training class for all field staff.

Zach Tripoulas attended the NTEP Lab Meeting last March 26-28 in Tulsa, Ok.

We are sending 6 employees; **Jermaine Hawkins, Hannah Seaton, Demika Patterson, Brian Flagg, Tom Cugle** and **Kass Belay** to the NIST packaging class held April 1 through April 4 in Gaithersburg, MD.

Roger Martin and Kass Belay will be attending the NIST LMD Seminar hosted by the CWMA May 6-9 in Canton, Oh.

Sending one Metrologist, **Tong Hsu**, to the C-RMAP workshop and measurement assurance program May 31- June 6 in Lake Mary, Fl.

Planning to send 3 to 4 individuals to the Kansas (NIST) VTM / Loading Rack Seminar hosted by CWMA June 10-14 in Lawrence, Ks.

Policy:

All computer software has to be updated to Windows 10 by January 1, 2020 and or replaced. So far all the desktop computers in the office have been replaced. Awaiting to be replaced are the 18 laptops used in the field with a tablet/laptop. This will allow customer signatures required in WinWam to write on the table screen instead of a signature pad. Lastly the 4 desktops used in the metrology will be replaced as well. 📧

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