



# Southern Weights & Measures Association

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157th Edition

SWMA Newsletter

July 2019

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## JURISDICTIONAL NEWS

### FLORIDA

Our lab staff in the new Pompano Beach petroleum lab is in the process of validating all the new and reconditioned equipment and will soon start accepting samples from the field.

The Bureau of Standards conducted a statewide skimmer sweep in April and May where inspectors inspected all the RMF devices at approximately 7,500 gas stations. During the sweep our inspectors found and removed 259 credit card skimmers. The total number of skimmers found in the State of Florida so far this calendar year is 793 and counting.

We began statistical selection of devices for performance testing several years ago and have found that most of our inspectors are now getting around their territories in less than 12 months. This has allowed us to increase our focus on net contents and price verification inspections. To facilitate these increased inspections, we just ordered 20 new package inspection scales and 40 handheld scanners.

The Legislature passed a budget that included funding for 28 new pickup trucks, 1 medium test unit and 1 replacement tractor for our large-scale program.

Our training staff is concentrating on training the remainder of our inspection staff to perform price verification inspections and we have set a goal of 8,000 price verification inspections in fiscal year 2019 – 2020.

We will be conducting our annual Inspector Workshop in Lake Mary, FL again this August. The weeklong workshop gives our team a chance to network with other inspectors from all over the state and brush up on several training and procedural items. The workshop is an exciting time for our program and something we look forward to each year. 📅

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## LOUISIANA

Since April, we have realigned two of our three field regions to be more uniform relative to the supervisory responsibilities of our middle managers. In addition, we are currently adding a District Supervisor and an additional field inspector in our Southwest District to help meet the demands due to the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) plant expansion in that area. This expansion is causing explosive growth in the number of new gas stations and other retail outlets that we are mandated to regulate.

Our Heavy-Duty (HD) Scale and Mass Flow Meter Program added a fourth inspector statewide. With the expanded use of flow meters and rail scales in chemical plants, this addition has fulfilled a dire need for our state. In addition to a new HD inspector, we've also purchased a brand-new HD truck. This will allow our new inspector the autonomy to inspect large scales on his own, and not be tied to a scale company to witness inspections.



**Left to Right,**  
**New Heavy-Duty inspector**  
**Randy Mobley,**  
**Commissioner Mike Strain,**  
**Bobby Fletcher, Jr.,**  
**Director of Weights and**  
**Measures.**



### Motor Fuel Program

Our motor fuel program continues to work with law enforcement officials at all levels to secure and remove skimming devices. We currently serve on the US Secret Service Skimmer Task Force and have been asked to provide training for law enforcement officials this summer regarding identifying and removing skimming devices from fuel pumps in Louisiana.

We are on track to complete the process of upgrading and installing 51 stainless steel prover storage tank systems onto our field inspection trucks. We are also adding four new trucks to our fleet this year. This phase is crucial to the improvement of our equipment for our field inspectors statewide. We are currently testing a maintenance body truck system that will be two feet shorter than our typical test truck. This should make it easier for our inspectors to maneuver the trucks in all situations.



**Lined up and ready for installation.**



**Maintenance body truck ready for installation of new storage tanks and J-provers.**

## Inspector Credentials and Training

We are now up to **33 NCWM Certifications** successfully completed. We are working to set up proctors in the Crowley and Haughton district offices. These offices will only be able to proctor the Basic Level exams. All of the Professional Level exams will continue to be offered at the Civil Service Testing Facility in Baton Rouge. We are also in the continued process of writing a comprehensive Training Manual for our inspectors.

## Price Verification

To date (2019), we have conducted more than 3,300 routine and follow-up price verification inspections with a 90% approval rate. We continue to improve the task of ensuring equity in the marketplace by promoting uniformed inspections, training our inspectors for proficiency, and enforcement. We also continue to reach out to businesses both large and small and offer to meet with them to help educate them about compliance with our laws and regulations.

### **Bobby H. Fletcher, Jr., PhD**

Director, Weights and Measures

Office of Agro-Consumer Services

Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry

LDAF Website: <http://www.ldaf.state.la.us/consumers/consumer-protection/>

YouTube Videos: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTzx2v3m6gIUgl-a4jTWxrrbeodKWLNTa>

"Winning Takes Talent, to repeat takes character." **John Wooden** 🇺🇸

## NORTH CAROLINA

### Motor Fuels Section

The Agricultural Sciences Building continues to take shape and recently the future home of the Motor Fuels Laboratory has started to be built. Laboratory administration has continued to work with Division System Analyst Susan Myrick and programmers from the Department's Emergency Programs Division to complete the electronic inspection portal to transition the Section's inspections off paper and into an electronic format. Work on this project has recently started to focus on testing bar code scanning options for use in sample tracking. At the same time, the work to develop the laboratory's quality management system has ramped up. Raleigh Field Inspector Nikki Brown has temporarily been assigned to work with Laboratory Supervisor **Melissa Spencer** to help develop the documentation for this system. Nikki has prior industry experience with ISO17025, and quality management will be crucial in pushing this project forward.

In personnel related news, Octane Analyst **Ned Perry** will be retiring in September after fourteen years with the Department. Ned has been a key member of our lab and has been the go-to guy to fix everything. In other news, **Stephen Benjamin** and Program Manager **Marcus Helfrich** recently gave presentations at the southern regional

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meeting of the Motor Fuels Tax Section of the Federation of Tax Administrators. These presentations focused on highlighting the work the Division and the Motor Fuels Section does in the marketplace and included a tour of one of the new motor fuels mobile laboratory vehicles.

**Marcus Helfrich**

### **Measurement Section**

Greetings from the Tarheel state, North Carolina.

Spring is over and summer is fast approaching, or it feels like it is already here. We closed most of our seasonal inspections. Had some failed inspections in fertilizer that kept prolonging things, but hopefully lots will be better next year. Skimmers found this year has jumped a good bit from last year. The media jumped on the reports and we had a nice amount of press concerning the findings. Things continue to go smooth and I would like to thank my supervisors for that.

We continue to add to our staff and fill out the holes in my section. **Josh Overman** took our heavy scale position in the mid-west part of the state. He came to us with a background as a large-scale technician and he has settled in nicely. We just hired two new fuel dispenser positions in the western part of the state. Both will be reporting very soon to start with us. I would like to welcome **Luke Craven** and **Mark Smagner**. Both will be a huge help to us.

The month of June is when our lab calibrates our inspectors' weights and provers. It's a busy time to get all our equipment in and out. We have one calibrator truck still being fitted. We are just waiting on the PTO to be installed.

Enjoy the summer and your vacation, God Bless,

**Chad Parker**

### **LP-Gas Section**

LP-Gas Engineer **Richard Fredenburg** attended the NPGA Southeastern Convention and international Propane Expo on April 13-15. There were some interesting seminars on responsibilities for safety and to protect companies from liability. He also participated in the Cylinder Exchange Council meeting and had interesting conversations about equipment and safety on the expo floor.

The NC DEQ held a Risk Management Program task force meeting on April 18. Most of the meeting is spent discussing various chemical concerns other than LP-Gas, but a considerable amount of time is often spent discussing railcar shipment and storage of butane intended for blending with gasoline.

The NC Propane Gas Association held their annual meeting on June 18. The technical session was a presentation by a USDOT investigator and touched on many DOT requirements for transporting LP-Gases. There was an emphasis on proper actions for requalifying and filling cylinders with a special emphasis on responsibilities when it is determined that a cylinder is to be condemned. The general meeting, an official meeting of the association's board of directors, consisted of reports by committees, announcement of scholarship recipients, and general discussions related to the industry.

**Richard Fredenburg** ↗

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## TENNESSEE

This is a very busy time in the weights and measures world here in Tennessee. Our cross trained inspectors are finishing up their device inspections for the current FY ending June 30<sup>th</sup>. To date they have visited over 7,500 locations conducting inspections on 94,000+ fuel dispensers and 18,000 commercial scales. Additionally, our LPG/Fuel meter inspectors have completed their propane meter inspections and transitioning to fuel.

We are hosting the NIST sponsored LPG Measuring Device Seminar the week of June 24. There are 18 people registered from several states and we are sure this will great educational experience for the attendees and we want to thank NIST for providing this important training.

Tennessee is honored and pleased to be hosting the SWMA annual conference this fall in Knoxville. The dates are October 5 - 9 and we look forward to seeing everyone there as we conduct the important business of the conference and find time to catch up with each other. There will be a University of Tennessee vs. Georgia football game in Knoxville on Saturday 10/5 and that will have an impact on traffic and ease to get to the hotel before and after the game. Actual game time has not been determined yet. We plan to have all conference and registration information up on the SWMA and available by the time you receive this newsletter. Have a great summer and I look forward to seeing many of you at the National conference and then all of you at the Southern conference. 🇺🇸

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

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