



County of Bucks

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION / WEIGHTS & MEASURES

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MEMO: SCALE INSTALLATIONS AND REPAIRS

Extracts from Pennsylvania Consolidated Weights and Measures Act 155 of 1996, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology Handbook 44, 2000 Edition.

- 1. ZERO BALANCE is the owner's responsibility:** a scale must indicate zero at all times with no load on its weigh pan. If the scale is out of zero balance, it must be immediately adjusted.
- 2. CUSTOMER READABILITY is the owner's responsibility:** scale manufacturers are required by law to make weighing indications on the customer's side of the scale. It is your responsibility that the scale is so positioned that its indications may be read accurately and the **weighing operation observed from a reasonable "customer" and "operator" position.** The permissible distance between the equipment and a reasonable customer and operator position shall be determined in each case upon the basis of the individual circumstance, particularly the size and character of the indicating element.
- 3. LIGHT IN THE SCALE is the owner's responsibility:** if the scale is equipped with a light that illuminates the reading elements inside the scale, the light must be operable. Lighted digital indicator must work on both the operator's and customer's side of the device.
- 4. ACCURATE READING OF THE SCALE is the owner's responsibility:** be sure to make an accurate weight determination by reading to the lowest last full graduation. Rounding off to an ounce or $\frac{1}{4}$ pound is not permitted. When computing the price, you must compute accurately to the nearest cent.
- 5. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS are the owner's responsibility:** the area around the scale must be kept clear and clean at all times. Environmental factors such as fans, open doors or refrigerator compressors are not permitted to affect the accuracy of the scales.
- 6. TARE MECHANISM is the owner's responsibility:** if you own an electronic prepackaging, computing or digital scale, it is equipped with a tare mechanism, which allows you to compensate for paper, cardboard and plastic wrapping. The tare mechanism is only permitted to operate in the backward direction. Be sure to reset your tare every time you weigh a new commodity.
- 7. TYPE APPROVAL:** State approval of the design, accuracy, and application of weighing and measuring equipment is required prior to commercial use in Pennsylvania.
- 8. DRAINAGE is the owner's responsibility:** a load-receiving element intended to receive wet commodities shall be so constructed as to drain effectively.

9. SUPPORT FOR SCALE is the owner's responsibility: a scale must be so positioned that it is firmly and securely supported on a sound base to prevent vibration and to maintain a level condition.

10. LEVEL CONDITION is the owner's responsibility: a scale must be maintained in a level condition at all times, firmly placed on its supports. Wedges of wood or paper placed underneath the legs to obtain level are not acceptable.

11. REPAIRS AND INSTALLATION NOTIFICATION is the repair person or installer's responsibility: the Weights and Measures Office must be notified within 48 hours of installation of new equipment or repairs to existing equipment. After notification, the owner(s) may use the device for a period not to exceed fifteen (15) days while waiting for Weights and Measures inspection of the device.

12. MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT: all equipment in service shall be continuously maintained in proper operating condition throughout the period of such service. Equipment found to be in error predominantly in a direction favorable to the scale user should not be considered "maintained in a proper operating condition".

13. HELPFUL REMINDERS

- a. Everything that is sold in your store is weighed, measured or counted. That scale is your "bread and butter"! Keep it clean and maintain it in proper working order.
- b. If you find your scale is not working properly, it is your duty to have it repaired then, not just when a weights and measures inspector rejects it. If you cannot make the necessary adjustments yourself, such as re-leveling or zero balance adjustment, then you should secure the assistance of a reputable scale repair service.
- c. Weights and measures inspectors are not repairmen. They will not service or make adjustments after testing it. If it is rejected, the scale cannot be used commercially until it is repaired and re-tested. If the scale is sufficiently beyond repair, the inspector can seize it.

REGISTRATION FEE: Beginning January 2001 all weights and measures devices in commercial use in Bucks County must be registered with the Bucks County Department of Weights and Measures. Each device requires a certain annual fee to be paid. Invoices will be sent to businesses in the early part of each year. The registration fee for scales up to 2000 pound capacity in commercial use and/or non-commercial use but are required by the user to be inspected, is \$25.00 per device.