



## Accurate, More or Less? A Look at Wisconsin's 2018 Weights and Measures Numbers

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*Editor's Note: National Weights and Measures Week is March 1-7.*

MADISON – When you shop for a product at your local Wisconsin business, you expect to get the correct amount of product for your money and to be charged the correct price for the items. Keeping a fair marketplace takes a good faith effort from businesses to ensure that their scales, registers, and pumps are accurate and requires regular monitoring to ensure that businesses are held accountable for these responsibilities.

To this end, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) tests product scales, registers, gas pumps, and fuel quality at stores throughout the state every day. The final numbers are in for the department's 2018 field inspections, and consumers faced a fair marketplace throughout Wisconsin yet again last year.

“Year after year, Wisconsin businesses show that they respect their customers and take their responsibilities seriously in keeping their measurement and sales devices accurate,” said Lara Sutherlin, administrator for the Division of Trade and Consumer Protection. “It is always a pleasure to release the annual weights and measures inspection numbers because they show the efforts of our inspectors in ensuring a fair marketplace and shed light on the great work of Wisconsin businesses in keeping their operations in order.”

DATCP's weights and measures team conducted 258,720 inspections at 6,580 business locations statewide in 2018. In line with results from recent years:

- Wisconsin gas pumps continued to provide the correct amount of fuel, or even over-deliver, in nearly 100% of our tests in 2018.
- Prices at the register were also accurate or in a consumer's favor in nearly 99% of our tests.
- Tests on scales used to weigh products specifically sold by weight (such as bulk grain at grocery stores) were accurate or measured in the customer's favor almost 100% of the time.
- Products sold by weight (such as ground beef) were labeled accurately in almost 99% of tests.

Inspectors also tested 5,036 fuel samples for quality last year, and nearly 99% of the samples met required national standards.

When inspectors find inaccurate measurements in the field, violations are reported to store management and orders are issued to correct the problem. In 2018, DATCP inspectors:

- Conducted 786 weights and measures re-inspections to ensure that accuracy corrections were made.
- Rejected and required corrections on 2,092 scales and meters for inaccuracies.
- Rejected 1,942 packages sold by weight for being short measure.
- Ordered 755 prices corrected for ringing up inaccurately at the register.

Where inspectors find repeat violations, higher-level enforcement is possible. In 2018, civil forfeiture settlements totaling \$196,928.70 were collected from companies as a result of weights and measures inspections including fuel quality violations, product quantity misrepresentations, and weights and measures service company violations.

“National Weights and Measures Week is a great opportunity to spotlight the hard work of DATCP’s inspectors and lab teams and their importance in keeping a fair marketplace,” said Sutherlin. “We are all consumers and we all rely on their expertise and efforts to give each dollar its maximum buying power.”

For additional information or to file a weights and measures complaint, visit [datcp.wi.gov](http://datcp.wi.gov), send an email to [datcpweightsandmeasures@wi.gov](mailto:datcpweightsandmeasures@wi.gov) or call 608-224-4942.

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**DATCP’s 2018 weights and measures results include:**

<b>Gas Pumps</b>	Grades of Fuel Tested	Consumer Confidence*	Total Accuracy**
	45,192	99.7% (down .1% from 2017)	97.8% (down .4% from 2017)
<b>Price Accuracy</b>	Items Tested		
	57,027	98.7% (up .1% from 2017)	95.3% (down .9% from 2017)
<b>Retail Scales</b>	Scales Inspected		
	10,729	99.7% (down .1% from 2017)	95.8% (down .5 from 2017)
<b>Package Weight</b>	Packages Inspected		
	139,470	98.6% (up .1% from 2017)	98.6% (up .1% from 2017)

\* *Percentage of time a consumer would be charged accurately or undercharged*

\*\* *Includes all overcharges and undercharges*

Inspectors also tested 5,036 fuel samples for quality last year. 98.8% of these samples met required standards (up .8% from 2017).