

## About the Office of Weights & Measures

*The State Office of Weights and Measures is a Division within the Ohio Department of Agriculture. The State Office operates the Metrology and NTEP Laboratories, manages the Voluntary Registration of Servicepersons and Agencies Program, tests packaged commodities, Vehicle and Livestock Scales, LP Gas, Vehicle-Tank and Loading Rack meters.*

*The State Office also advises, assists and trains the local jurisdictions with weights and measures programs. Local weights and measures programs are primarily within the county auditor's offices. Two Ohio cities also have weights and measures offices.*

*The national requirements adopted by Ohio are designed to promote uniformity in the marketplace. Accurate weights and measures and consistently applied rules foster the spirit of fair competition and provide industry with an equal opportunity for profit.*

### For further information contact:

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# Purchasing a Scale



## *Legal Requirements for Small Capacity Scales in Ohio*

Office of Weights and Measures

# BEFORE YOU PURCHASE A SCALE....

## Where do you begin ?

*Before you purchase a scale for commercial use, you must have answers to a few basic questions.*

### Do I need a scale?

*Yes, if you are buying or selling products or services required to be sold by weight.*

### What type of scale do I need?

*The type of scale depends upon its intended use.*

*You will want to consider:*

- *The type of product being sold.*
- *The scale capacity needed.*
- *The division size of the scale*
- *The environment in which the scale will be used.*
- *Legal Requirements for commercial use.*

## BASIC REQUIREMENTS

Consider the following requirements when purchasing a scale.

### √ Suitability

Scales are required to be suitable for their intended use and their environment. Different types of scale designs are appropriate for selling different types of products and services. Scales may be designed to be used on a counter top and compute a price or hang from a support and give only weight indication. A scale designed for selling fruits and vegetables at an outdoor market will have different features and requirements than a scale designed for shipping packages.

NOTE: Commodities are required to be sold by “net weight”. Net weights is the weight of the product excluding the weight of the packaging material. A suitable scale for weighing wrapped packages will have a “tare” feature that will deduct the weight of the packaging material.

### √ NTEP

Scales used commercially in the State must have an NTEP certificate of conformance. The National Type Evaluation Program, known as NTEP, issues certificates for device types that meet specific requirements and pass rigorous laboratory and field tests. Only device types with a recognized NTEP certificate are permitted to be used commercially. Make sure that the scale you purchase is one that has an NTEP certificate. A registered scale dealer or you rlocal weights and measures official can tell you if a scale is recognized under NTEP.

### √ Capacity and Division Size

Scale manufactures offer scales in many capacities and division sizes. For example, small capacity scales commonly used to sell retail food products often have a 30 pound capacity and a .01 pound division size. The scale divisions size is determined by the intended use and legal requirements for the scale. For instance, you should consider that small scales should not be used for the first 20 divisions.

### √ Scale Installation

Scales must be installed according to the manufacturer’s instructions. When considering the location, remember that customers must be able to see their purchases being weighed and must also be able to see the scale indications.

### √ Inspection and Testing

Scales are required to be tested and approved prior to being used commercially. Before using the scale, call your local weights and measures office and have an inspector test and inspect it. After the scale is tested and approved, the inspector will place an approval seal on the scale. Scales should also be tested by the weights and measurers official after they have been serviced or repaired. Scales are retested periodically by the local inspector. Scales may also be tested and placed into service by State-Registered servicepersons.

### √ Equipment Maintenance

Owners of weighing and measuring devices are required to maintain them in proper operating condition. Scales should be kept clean, level, and appropriately supported. They should be properly positioned, accurate and on zero at the start of any transaction. Regularly scheduled service by a competent serviceperson is highly recommended