

A special note about buying scales online:

Buying a scale online can be a risky venture. It's not that you shouldn't, but you need to be aware of what you are buying. There are many reputable retailers online for buying a scale. However, there are also retailers online that are looking for a quick sale, and may misrepresent what they are selling.

Do your research. Make sure that the scale you are interested in is NTEP approved with a Certificate of Conformance. Unfortunately, the less reputable online retailers may claim a scale is NTEP approved when it is not. A reputable retailer will be more than willing to assist you in determining if the scale you are interested meets all state requirements. Remember, the term "Legal for Trade" is thrown around a lot online. A scale is not inherently legal for trade. That determination is aided by having a Certificate of Conformance, but is also determined by the suitability of the scale for the intended use.

Remember, the Weights and Measures Services Division will be more than happy to assist in determining if the scale you want is legal for trade in Arizona.

The National Conference on Weights and Measures has created a fact sheet to help you in your search. You can view the fact sheet [HERE](#).

Many resources are available to help you choose the correct scale for your business.

**For More Information,
Please contact the
Arizona Department of
Agriculture – Weights
and Measures
Services Division**

Phone: 602-542-4373

E-mail: dwm@azda.gov

Web: <http://agriculture.az.gov>

Our Mission:

**TO PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF ARIZONA'S
MARKETPLACE BY ENSURING THAT EQUITY AND
ACCURACY ARE PRESERVED IN COMMERCE THROUGH
FAIR AND EVIDENT REGULATION AND THE EFFECTIVE
COMMUNICATION OF WEIGHT AND MEASUREMENT
STANDARDS**



**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE – WEIGHTS
AND MEASURES SERVICES
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WEIGHTS AND MEASURES



**WHAT YOU
SHOULD KNOW
BEFORE
PURCHASING A
COMMERCIAL
SCALE**

*Legal Requirements for
Commercial Scales in Arizona*

Before you purchase a scale, ask yourself a few questions...



Do I need a scale?

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

What type of scale do I need?

The type of scale you buy depends upon its intended use. You should consider:

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

How do I tell if it is NTEP-approved?

Go to: <http://www.ncwm.net/>
Click on: "NTEP Certificate Search"
Fill in known information and search

**All scales used commercially must be NTEP-approved.

BASIC REQUIREMENTS

Consider the following requirements when you purchase a scale:

Suitability

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

NOTE: Commodities are required to be sold by "net weight", which is the weight of the product excluding the weight of any packaging material. A scale used for weighing wrapped packages will have an option for taking a "tare," deducting the weight of any packaging from the weight of the goods being sold.

NTEP (National Type Evaluation Program)

Scales used commercially in the state of Arizona are required to have an NTEP Certificate of Conformance. NTEP issues certificates for device types that meet specific requirements, as well as passing a rigorous laboratory and field tests. Only device types with a recognized NTEP certificate are allowed to be used commercially. Whether you purchase your scale from a registered scale dealer, or buy a scale online, make sure that the scale you choose has an NTEP Certificate of Conformance. It is up to you, the operator of the scale, to ensure that it is legal for trade in the way it is installed and used. Scales that are not legal for trade will be removed from service. Don't make an expensive mistake!

Capacity and Division Size

Scale manufacturers offer scales in many capacities and division sizes. For example, a common scale found in a grocery store might have a 30 pound capacity, and a division size of .01 pounds. Choose a capacity that suits your intended use. The scale division size is also determined by the intended use of the scale. Be aware that small scales should not be used for weighing within the first 20 divisions.

Scale Installation

Scales must be installed as directed by the manufacturer. When choosing where to put your scale, remember that customers must be able to see the scale being used, as well as the indications of weight and price. When a scale is first installed, a Device License Application/Placed-In-Service report must be filed with the division to obtain a license. This form and instructions can be found on our website using the [Form Finder](#).

Inspection and Testing

Scales will be periodically tested and inspected by Weights and Measures investigators to determine that they are legal for use, accurate, and being used as intended. Scales should only be serviced and repaired by a licensed Registered Service Agency (RSA). A list of RSA's can be found by visiting our [RSA Search Page](#).

Equipment Maintenance

Owners of scales and other weighing and measuring devices are required to maintain them in proper operating condition. Scales should be kept clean, level, and appropriately supported. A scale should be properly positioned, accurate, and on zero at the start of any transaction. All the support feet on the scale should be in contact with a solid surface. Remember, a scale is a sensitive piece of equipment, not a table. Do not store any items on a scale. Having your scales regularly serviced by a registered service person is highly recommended.