



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

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Weights and Measures Audit finds Grocery Advertisements spot on

Finally some good news for shoppers as newspaper ads for grocery products found accurate

(Phoenix) –One way smart shoppers have found to cut those high grocery costs down is to keep an eye on the advertisements at your local grocery store. The Arizona Department of Weights and Measures put those sale ads to the test at 29 individual grocery stores statewide to ensure consumers were really getting the sale price at the cash register. The results of inspections conducted this month were extremely positive and give consumers one less thing to worry about when shopping for advertised products at grocery stores.

The final results show a remarkable 99.7% overall compliance rate with only one item overcharged at 2 of the 27 stores from the original newspaper (or in-store) advertisement. The 2 overcharged items totaled .93 cents to consumers, while undercharges (benefiting the consumer) were found to dominate the ad inspection inaccuracies. Grocery retailers undercharged 34 sale items at 10 stores totaling \$29.55 below what was priced in the advertisement. The inspections incorporated investigators bringing newspaper ads with them during the audit, and then verifying approximately 1,275 advertised products that were then individually scanned at the cash register.

“Time and again we see Arizona families who wait until the store ads publish good deals on groceries in order to help maintain their monthly food budget” stated Kevin Tyne, the Director of the Department of Weights and Measures. “Today’s report clearly shows the grocery industry is providing clear and accurate prices to their customers, building consumer confidence, and ensuring their customers get what they pay for.” added Tyne.

As part of the inspection process, investigators collected advertisements ahead of time to check the sale prices found in local newspapers, online coupons and in-store handouts, then conducted unannounced audits at retail stores and selected only the items advertised.

Department investigators also discovered several instances where advertised items were sold out, but in each instance, store officials ensured that customers were afforded an opportunity to purchase the items via “rain check,” or efforts were made to find the product at another location.

“The best advice that we can give consumers is to take the advertisement with you to the store,” stated Director Tyne, “in the event of a scanning error, each retail location is required to have a price error policy which dictates how the store will handle any pricing discrepancy.”