

Pest Prevention & Detection Division

The Pest Prevention and Detection Division includes several programs whose mission is to prevent the introduction of foreign pests. The Pest Exclusion Program is considered the first line of defense in fighting against foreign pests. The best way to manage these



pests is to deny them access. All commercial and many non-commercial shipments of plants and other goods capable of moving pests into the County are inspected. Infested shipments and items in violation of the plant quarantine regulations are either returned to the sender, treated to remove the pest risk or destroyed. Inspections are made at nurseries, moving companies, trucking firms and common carriers such as UPS, FedEx, OnTrac and the U.S. post office.

Despite our best efforts, pests can slip through our inspections on undeclared goods or by smuggling. Through Federal funding, the department has two canines trained to sniff out unmarked packages containing fruit and plant materials.



Thousands of insect detection traps are placed in parts of the County most at risk from foreign pests. Frequent inspection of these traps allows us to find unwanted pests before the pests have a chance to become established.

To protect other counties, states and countries, many types of commodities shipped from San Bernardino County are inspected and certified to meet the standards and requirements of their destination. This requires our Officers to be knowledgeable in the requirements of other states and foreign countries.



The Department's staff perform a variety of services. We are always happy to be of assistance. For your convenience, we can be contacted by e-mail at awm@awm.sbcounty.gov or call any of our offices.

OFFICE LOCATIONS

San Bernardino (Main Office)

777 E. Rialto Ave.
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800-734-9459
909-387-2105
FAX 909-387-2449

Ontario

1640 S. Grove Ave.
Ontario, CA 91764
909-673-0435
FAX 909-930-2571

Hesperia

15900 Smoketree St.
Hesperia, CA 92345
760-995-8251 or 8252 or 8253
FAX 760-995-8255

Barstow

(by appointment)
301 E. Mt. View Ave.
Barstow, CA 92311
760-256-4861
(FAX is same number)

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE / WEIGHTS & MEASURES



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Purpose

The Department of Agriculture / Weights & Measures conducts regulatory programs and provides related services to protect the agriculture industry, businesses and consumers in the County through the fair and equitable application of laws and regulations. The programs are designed to protect and promote the health and welfare of the general public. Our goal is to provide prompt, responsive services to the residents of the County.

History

In 1881, to address the growing needs of the agricultural industry, San Bernardino County became one of the first counties in California to create a Horticultural Commission, the precursor of the Department of Agriculture. The County Department of Weights and Measures originated in 1915 in response to California's Weights and Measures Act of 1913. This act established regular testing of commercial scales and measuring devices. The County Departments of Agriculture and Weights & Measures combined in 1993 in an effort to reduce administrative costs and to increase the resources available for regulatory inspection services. Both of these goals were met and today the Department is better able to serve the growing needs of the residents in the County.



The Department is currently divided into three divisions that provide a variety of services and inspections. The following is a brief explanation of the major functions of the Department, with emphasis on services performed for our residents.

Weights & Measures / Consumer Protection Division



Weights and Measures inspections promote equity in the marketplace, protecting both buyers and sellers by ensuring that commercial weighing and measuring devices are accurate and prices for goods are correctly charged. To make sure consumers get what they pay for, many different types of devices are inspected, including scales, gasoline pumps, taximeters, and mobile home park



utility sub-meters. The seal placed on these devices provides assurance that the device was accurate when tested. Devices that are inaccurate are placed out of service until repaired. Most devices are tested annually.



Prepackaged items with a quantity statement are checked to verify they contain the correct amount. This includes items packed by weight, volume or count. Inspections are made primarily at retail store locations and manufacturing plants.

Price scanning equipment is also inspected for accuracy by comparing the posted or advertised price to the sales receipt. Enforcement action is taken when violations occur.



Other activities include sampling petroleum products for required quality standards, petroleum labeling and price sign inspections, undercover test sales to recyclers to verify the accuracy of those transactions, weighmaster records audits, and investigations of all consumer complaints.



The division also inspects fruits & vegetables, Organic products and eggs. Inspections provide protection to consumers and wholesalers from substandard quality and mislabeled or deceptive packaging. Growers also benefit from this program of uniform, orderly marketing of comparable products. The inspections are conducted at local produce outlets, egg packing firms and Certified Farmer's Markets.

Environmental Protection Regulatory Division

The division is comprised of three main programs: Pesticide Enforcement, Pest Management and Pest Eradication. In addition, the division also is responsible for Apiary Regulation of commercial bee hives.



The Pesticide Enforcement Program is focused on protecting pest control company employees, the public and the environment from improper pesticide use.



Pesticides can be very harmful when used improperly. Commercial businesses, farmers and others using pesticides are monitored closely to ensure public safety. Pesticide users are required to follow stringent safety requirements and can be restricted to certain application times to minimize the public's exposure.

Illnesses and complaints are promptly investigated to determine how and why the problem occurred. Enforcement action is taken when violations occur. As a result, pesticide related problems from commercial use in San Bernardino County are practically non-existent.

The Pest Management Program controls weeds along roads and flood channels to reduce fire hazards and lower maintenance costs.



Some unwanted pests have become established in the County. The Pest Eradication Program evaluates the potential for economic harm and launches an eradication effort when feasible. The Pest Eradication Program deals primarily with noxious weeds such as knapweeds and yellow star thistle. These weeds are of limited distribution in the County and are considered to be significant threats to the environment due to their noxious, invasive growth. When warranted, insects and other pests may also be placed under eradication.

The Apiary Program resolves complaints regarding commercial beekeepers and provides disease inspection services for beekeepers moving bees out of state. Beekeepers are required to have permission to use the property where they place their colonies of bees and to provide an adequate supply of water for the bees.

