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# Information

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## Scale Information for Buyers and Sellers of Precious Metals and Gemstones

In general, scales for use in trade (buying or selling commodities on the basis of weight) must be approved and inspected before they can be used to buy and sell commodities. Approved scales often have restrictions that limit how they may be used. The following information will help you to determine which scales are approved for use in trade when buying and selling precious metals or gemstones.

### Do You Need an Approved Scale?

You **must use** an approved and inspected scale if

- the scale is used to buy or sell precious metals or gemstones and the weight is used or is one of the factors used to calculate the price of the item;
- the scale is installed in a manufacturing facility and is used to determine the weight of an item which is marked on a label or tag attached to the item before it is offered for sale.

You **do not need** an approved and inspected scale if

- the scale is located in a retail store but is used for internal, non-trade use only, such as verifying the weights of items for inventory purposes. The scale should not be located in the retail area of the store;
- the scale is used only for jewellery appraisal purposes;
- the scale is in a jewellery manufacturing facility and used only for production or inventory control purposes;
- the scale is used for other non trade applications.

### Scale Requirements for Precious Metals

If your scale usage includes buying and selling **precious metals** by weight at the retail level of trade, the approved scale must be rated as a Class II or better accuracy class and must have graduations (also referred to as **e**) that are equal to or less than 0.01 gram. Most of the currently approved scales with **e** = 0.01 g will have a weighing capacity that is **620 g or less**. For wholesale or industrial usage, the scale must also have a Class II rating, however its **e** value may be equal to or greater than 0.02 g but with a weight minimum of 2,000 **e**. The Measurement Canada (MC) Notice of Approval (NoA) for the scale will indicate the class, capacity and **e** value of the scale.

In instances where items that are heavier than a scale can weigh are being negotiated (for example, sterling silver teapots or serving trays), the transaction can be completed by simply making an offer to the customer for the item. For informational purposes, a scale with a larger weighing capacity and **e** value could be used to weigh the item, however, the weight **can not** be used to calculate the price of the item. As above, the transaction can be completed by simply making an offer for the item.

## Scale Requirements for Gemstones

If your usage includes buying and selling **gemstones** by weight at any level of trade, the approved scale must be rated as a Class II or better accuracy class and must have **e** equal to or less than 0.001 g. The MC NoA will indicate the class, capacity and **e** value of the scale.

### Warning: Scale Model Selection

A NoA may include several models of scales that have larger **e** values, such as **e** = 0.1 g or **e** = 1.0 g. They may also have larger weighing capacities. Although all of the scales are approved, the scales with the larger **e** values, are not suitable for use in the retail precious metals or the gemstones scenarios outlined above. When searching for a scale, ensure that **e** is equal to or less than 0.01 g or 0.001 g as your circumstances dictate. If you are uncertain about the scale being considered, please contact your Regional Gravimetric Specialist listed at the end of this document.

### Moving a Scale from One Location to Another

When these scales are moved from one location to another their calibration might change and this can result in inaccurate measurements at the new location. Consequently, these scales should be tested at each new location to ensure accurate measurement. There are approved scales available that have self calibrating features to address this concern [see NoA numbers; AM 5007, AM 5172, AM 5226, AM 5280, AM 5335, AM 5589, AM 5773]. MC recommends that precious metals and gemstones buyers and sellers that move from location to location consider purchasing a scale with these features.

Scales without self calibrating features must be checked and when necessary, recalibrated using suitable test weights. When a manual calibration is made, a written report must be sent to the local MC District Office within 5 days. [Reporting Form](#)<sup>link1</sup>

### Scale Manufacturers and Suppliers

We recommend that you contact your scale supplier and discuss your scale needs with one of their representatives. Ensure that the representative understands that the scale must be an approved model, what you want to weigh with it and that the **e** value is appropriate for your application. They will be able to provide you with information about their scales and help you in selecting an approved scale suitable to your needs. If you are uncertain about the scale being considered, please contact your Regional Gravimetric Specialist listed at the end of this document for assistance.

### Measurement Canada Approvals Database

The scale provider will be able to give you the MC NoA number for your scale. If you want to confirm that the scale is in fact approved, you can do so on the MC website. [Notice of Approval Database](#).<sup>link 2</sup>

If you are having difficulty accessing a NoA or are not sure that the scale being considered is an appropriate model, contact your Regional Gravimetric Specialist (see below) for assistance.

## Further Information

If you have any questions about the above information or are unsure about the type of scale you need for your business, please contact your Regional Gravimetric Specialist.

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[link 1] [http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/mc-mc.nsf/vwapj/ic3161ba.pdf/\\$file/ic3161ba.pdf](http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/mc-mc.nsf/vwapj/ic3161ba.pdf/$file/ic3161ba.pdf)

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