



The Basics of Tare

BUREAU OF WEIGHTS & MEASURES

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RESOURCES

More information on applicable Wisconsin laws can be found at these links:

NIST Handbook 133

<http://www.nist.gov/pml/wmd/pubs/upload/h133-2015-web-final.pdf>

Wis. Stat. Chapter 98

<http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/98/Title>

Wis. Admin. Code ATCP 90

http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/atcp/090/91/Title

➤ **What is tare?**

Tare is all material used in the packaging and preservation of a product that is not part of the actual commodity for sale. It may include boxes, trays, soakers, bags, labels, glue, ties, wrappers, prizes, gifts, coupons, ice glazing, wax and any other material that is not part of the actual product. For commodities sold by weight, the declared package weight must be exclusive of the weight of tare materials.

➤ **How is the weight of tare determined?**

Tare weight is determined by weighing clean, dry, unused or used tare materials. To set a tare, it is recommended that you average the tare weights from at least 10 packages of the same item. For products that are sold from bulk and include individual wrappers, the weight of the individual wrappers must also be included in the tare.

➤ **How is tare taken?**

Tare can either be programmed into the scale or cash register system used to weigh the product, or it can be entered manually by store personnel.

➤ **Who is responsible for determining and taking tare?**

Primarily, whomever is responsible for the weight declaration on the commodity is responsible for tare. Determining and taking an appropriate tare on products that are weighed prior to reaching the retail level is generally the responsibility of the party who packaged them. Determining and taking an appropriate tare on products that are weighed at the retail level is the responsibility of the store. Note, however, that a retail establishment can ultimately be held accountable for an incorrect net weight on any product they sell.

➤ **What are the responsibilities of store management with regard to tare?**

Store management is responsible for ensuring that all tares are accurate, whether they are taken automatically or manually. This may include verifying tares for items packaged off the premises. When the packaging of a product changes, the tare must also be changed accordingly. Manual tare weights should be conspicuously posted for store personnel to reference. Be aware that only one tare can be taken at a time, (either automatically or manually), so store personnel must weigh each package individually. If they do not, tare for the additional packages will not be accounted for.

➤ **What if tare varies from package to package of the same commodity?**

This is a common problem in the sale of random weight products, particularly bulk commodities that are individually wrapped. The more the consumer buys, the more tare has to be accounted for. One option is to use a variable tare scale that can be programmed to adjust the tare as the weight fluctuates. An alternative is to program or list the tare as the maximum that will need to be taken for any single package or purchase.