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Appendix A. Fundamental Considerations Associated with the Enforcement of Handbook 44 Codes

1. Uniformity of Requirements

1.1. National Council Codes. – Weights and measures jurisdictions are urged to promulgate and adhere to the National Council codes, to the end that uniform requirements may be in force throughout the country. This action is recommended even though a particular jurisdiction does not wholly agree with every detail of the National Council codes. Uniformity of specifications and tolerances is an important factor in the manufacture of commercial equipment. Deviations from standard designs to meet the special demands of individual weights and measures jurisdictions are expensive, and any increase in costs of manufacture is, of course, passed on to the purchaser of equipment. On the other hand, if designs can be standardized by the manufacturer to conform to a single set of technical requirements, production costs can be kept down, to the ultimate advantage of the general public. Moreover, it seems entirely logical that equipment that is suitable for commercial use in the “specification” states should be equally suitable for such use in other states.

Another consideration supporting the recommendation for uniformity of requirements among weights and measures jurisdictions is the cumulative and regenerative effect of the widespread enforcement of a single standard of design and performance. The enforcement effort in each jurisdiction can then reinforce the enforcement effort in all other jurisdictions. More effective regulatory control can be realized with less individual effort under a system of uniform requirements than under a system in which even minor deviations from standard practice are introduced by independent state action.

Since the National Council codes represent the majority opinion of a large and representative group of experienced regulatory officials, and since these codes are recognized by equipment manufacturers as their basic guide in the design and construction of commercial weighing and measuring equipment, the acceptance and promulgation of these codes by each state are strongly recommended.

1.2. Form of Promulgation. – A convenient and very effective form of promulgation already successfully used in a considerable number of states is promulgation by citation of National Institute of Standards and Technology Handbook 44. It is especially helpful when the citation is so made that, as amendments are adopted from time to time by the National Council on Weights and Measures, these automatically go into effect in the state regulatory authority. For example, the following form of promulgation has been used successfully and is recommended for consideration:

The specifications, tolerances, and other technical requirements for weighing and measuring devices as recommended by the National Council on Weights and Measures and published in the National Institute of Standards and Technology Handbook 44, “Specifications, Tolerances, and Other Technical Requirements for Weighing and Measuring Devices,” and supplements thereto or revisions thereof, shall apply to commercial weighing and measuring devices in the state.

In some states, it is preferred to base technical requirements upon specific action of the state legislature rather than upon an act of promulgation by a state officer. The advantages cited above may be obtained and may yet be surrounded by adequate safeguards to insure proper freedom of action by the state enforcing officer if the legislature adopts the National Council requirements by language somewhat as follows:

The specifications, tolerances, and other technical requirements for weighing and measuring devices as recommended by the National Council on Weights and Measures shall be the specifications, tolerances, and other technical requirements for weighing and measuring devices of the state except insofar as specifically modified, amended, or rejected by a regulation issued by the state (insert title of enforcing officer).

2. Tolerances for Commercial Equipment

2.1. Acceptance and Maintenance Tolerances. – The official tolerances prescribed by a weights and measures jurisdiction for commercial equipment are the limits of inaccuracy officially permissible within that jurisdiction. It is recognized that errorless value or performance of mechanical equipment is unattainable. Tolerances are established, therefore, to fix the range of inaccuracy within which equipment will be officially approved for commercial use. In the case of classes of equipment on which the magnitude of the errors of value or performance may be expected to change as a result of use, two sets of tolerances are established: acceptance tolerances and maintenance tolerances.

Acceptance tolerances are applied to new or newly reconditioned equipment; equipment returned to service following official rejection for failure to conform to performance requirements; or equipment undergoing NTEP evaluation, and are smaller than (usually one-half of) the maintenance tolerances. Maintenance tolerances thus provide an additional range of inaccuracy within which equipment will be approved on subsequent tests, permitting a limited amount of deterioration before the equipment will be officially rejected for inaccuracy and before reconditioning or adjustment will be required. In effect, there is assured a reasonable period of use for equipment after it is placed in service before reconditioning will be officially required. The foregoing comments do not apply, of course, when only a single set of tolerance values is established, as is the case with equipment such as glass milk bottles and graduates, which maintain their original accuracy regardless of use, and measure-containers, which are used only once.

2.2. Theory of Tolerances. – Tolerance values are so fixed that the permissible errors are sufficiently small that there is no serious injury to either the buyer or the seller of commodities, yet not so small as to make manufacturing or maintenance costs of equipment disproportionately high. Obviously, the manufacturer must know what tolerances his equipment is required to meet, so that he can manufacture economically. His equipment must be good enough to satisfy commercial needs but should not be subject to such stringent tolerance values as to make it unreasonably costly, complicated, or delicate.

2.3. Tolerances and Adjustments. – Tolerances are primarily accuracy criteria for use by the regulatory official. However, when equipment is being adjusted for accuracy, either initially or following repair or official rejection, the objective should be to adjust as closely as practicable to zero error. Equipment owners should not take advantage of tolerances by deliberately adjusting their equipment to have a value, or to give performance, at or close to the tolerance limit. Nor should the repair or service personnel bring equipment merely within tolerance range when it is possible to adjust closer to zero error.¹

3. Testing Apparatus

3.1. Adequacy. – Tests can be made properly only if, among other things, adequate testing apparatus is available. Testing apparatus may be considered adequate only when it is properly designed for its intended use, when it is so constructed that it will retain its characteristics for a reasonable period under conditions of normal use, when it is available in denominations appropriate for a proper determination of the value or performance of the commercial equipment under test, and when it is accurately calibrated.

(Amended 2023)

3.1.1. Essential Elements of Traceability. – To ensure that field test standards and test methods provide for measurements that are traceable to the International System of Units (SI), through NIST or other National Metrology Institutes, they must satisfy the “Essential Elements of Traceability.” As explained in NIST IR6969 GMP-13 Good Measurement Practice for Ensuring Metrological Traceability, these elements include the following.

- Realization of SI Units
- Unbroken Chain of Comparisons
- Documented Calibration Program

¹ See General Code, Section 1.10.; User Requirement G-UR.4.3. Use of Adjustments.

- Documented Measurement Uncertainty
- Documented Measurement Procedure
- Accredited Technical Competence
- Measurement Assurance

3.1.2. Specifications for Standards. – Standards shall meet the specifications of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Handbook 105-Series standards or other appropriate designated documentary standards (e.g., ASTM, ASME, etc.). Recommendations regarding the specifications and tolerances for suitable field standards may be obtained from the Office of Weights and Measures of the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

3.1.3. Authority for Approving Field Test Standards and/or Equipment. – This section shall not preclude the use of additional field standards and/or equipment, as approved by the Director, for uniform evaluation of device performance. Specific types of field test standards are not required to be identified in a NIST Handbook 44 code in order to be considered suitable. Provided the standards meet the “Essential Elements of Traceability” (described in Section 3.1.1. above) that help ensure the standards are suitable and capable of supporting measurements traceable to the International System of Units (SI) through NIST or other National Metrology Institutes, they need only be approved by the Director.

(Added 2023)

3.2. Tolerances for Standards. – Except for work of relatively high precision, it is recommended that the accuracy of standards used in testing commercial weighing and measuring equipment be established and maintained so that the use of corrections is not necessary. When the standard is used without correction, its combined error and uncertainty must be less than one-third of the applicable device tolerance.

Device testing is complicated to some degree when corrections to standards are applied. When using a correction for a field standard or a transfer standard, the uncertainty associated with the corrected value must be less than one-third of the applicable device tolerance. The reason for this requirement is to give the device being tested as nearly as practicable the full benefit of its own tolerance.

Whenever possible and practical, field standards should be used to test commercial weighing and measuring devices. However, where it is impractical or unduly cumbersome to use field standards, transfer standards may be used. There are two categories of transfer standards. The critical criteria that distinguish between these standards are: (1) the accuracy and uncertainty of the standard; (2) the stability as a standard over a designated period of time (as determined by the Director); and (3) demonstrated validity or performance of the standard over the range of environmental and operational conditions in which the standard can be reasonably anticipated to be used.

A “field standard” is one that meets the one-third requirement mentioned earlier in this section. Additionally, the field standard maintains its validity or stability as a standard over an designated period of time (defined based on data of the standard’s stability by an authorized metrology lab or as specified by the Director) and can be demonstrated to maintain its value as a standard over the range of environmental conditions and the range of operating conditions in which the standard can be reasonably anticipated to be used to test commercial weighing and measuring devices.

Transfer standards do not meet one or more of these critical criteria. One category of transfer standards, which is referred to here as a “Type 1 transfer standard,” is a transfer standard that meets the one-third accuracy requirement for a limited time of use, under a limited range of environmental conditions and/or a limited range of operating conditions. The accuracy of a Type 1 transfer standard may have to be verified through testing each time it is used to verify that the desired accuracy and performance can be achieved when the Type 1 transfer standard is used under the limited environmental and operating conditions. When a Type 1 transfer standard is used, the basic tolerances specified for the commercial weighing and measuring devices are applied as specified in the applicable codes.

The second category of transfer standard, which is referred to here as a “Type 2 transfer standard,” is one that does not meet the one-third requirement. The Type 2 transfer standard must be stable and valid under the environmental or operating conditions in which it can be reasonably anticipated to be used. The performance characteristics must be

confirmed with sufficient data to properly characterize the uncertainty associated with the Type 2 transfer standard. When a Type 2 transfer standard is used, the tolerances applicable to the commercial weighing and measuring device must be increased to recognize the large uncertainty associated with the Type 2 transfer standard. When commercial weighing and measuring devices are tested using a Type 2 transfer standard, the tolerance applied to the commercial weighing and measuring devices meter under test shall be determined as specified in Section 1.10. General Code, G-T.5. Tolerances on Tests When Type 2 Transfer Standards Are Used.

(Added 2023)

3.3. Accuracy of Field Standards. – Prior to the official use of testing apparatus, its accuracy should invariably be verified. Field standards should be calibrated as often as circumstances require. A field standard should be calibrated whenever damage is known or suspected to have occurred or significant repairs have been made. In addition, field standards should be calibrated with sufficient frequency to affirm their continued accuracy, so that the official may always be in an unassailable position with respect to the accuracy of his testing apparatus.

Accurate and dependable results cannot be obtained with faulty or inadequate field standards. If either the service person or official is poorly equipped, their results cannot be expected to check consistently. Disagreements can be avoided and the servicing of commercial equipment can be expedited and improved if service persons and officials give equal attention to the adequacy and maintenance of their testing apparatus.

(Amended 2023)

4. Inspection of Commercial Equipment

4.1. Inspection Versus Testing. – A distinction may be made between the inspection and the testing of commercial equipment that should be useful in differentiating between the two principal groups of official requirements; i.e., specifications and performance requirements. Although the term inspection is frequently loosely used to include everything that the official has to do in connection with commercial equipment, it is useful to limit the scope of that term primarily to examinations made to determine compliance with design, maintenance, and user requirements. The term testing may then be limited to those operations carried out to determine the accuracy of value or performance of the equipment under examination by comparison with the actual physical standards of the official. These two terms will be used herein in the limited senses defined.

4.2. Necessity for Inspection. – It is not enough merely to determine that the errors of equipment do not exceed the appropriate tolerances. Specification and user requirements are as important as tolerance requirements and should be enforced. Inspection is particularly important and should be carried out with unusual thoroughness whenever the official examines a type of equipment not previously encountered.

This is the way the official learns whether or not the design and construction of the device conform to the specification requirements. But even a device of a type with which the official is thoroughly familiar and that he has previously found to meet specification requirements should not be accepted entirely on faith. Some part may have become damaged, or some detail of design may have been changed by the manufacturer, or the owner or operator may have removed an essential element or made an objectionable addition. Such conditions may be learned only by inspection. Some degree of inspection is therefore an essential part of the official examination of every piece of weighing or measuring equipment.

4.3. Specification Requirements. – A thorough knowledge by the official of the specification requirements is a prerequisite to competent inspection of equipment. The inexperienced official should have his specifications before him when making an inspection and should check the requirements one by one against the equipment itself. Otherwise, some important requirement may be overlooked. As experience is gained, the official will become progressively less dependent on the handbook, until finally observance of faulty conditions becomes almost automatic and the time and effort required to do the inspecting are reduced to a minimum. The printed specifications, however, should always be available for reference to refresh the official's memory or to be displayed to support his decisions, and they are an essential item of his kit.

Specification requirements for a particular class of equipment are not all to be found in the separate code for that class. The requirements of the General Code apply, in general, to all classes of equipment, and these must always be considered in combination with the requirements of the appropriate separate code to arrive at the total of the requirements applicable to a piece of commercial equipment.

4.4. General Considerations. – The simpler the commercial device, the fewer are the specification requirements affecting it, and the more easily and quickly can adequate inspection be made. As mechanical complexity increases, however, inspection becomes increasingly important and more time consuming, because the opportunities for the existence of faulty conditions are multiplied. It is on the relatively complex device, too, that the official must be on the alert to discover any modification that may have been made by an operator that might adversely affect the proper functioning of the device.

It is essential for the officials to familiarize themselves with the design and operating characteristics of the devices that he inspects and tests. Such knowledge can be obtained from the catalogs and advertising literature of device manufacturers, from trained service persons and plant engineers, from observation of the operations performed by service persons when reconditioning equipment in the field, and from a study of the devices themselves.

Inspection should include any auxiliary equipment and general conditions external to the device that may affect its performance characteristics. In order to prolong the life of the equipment and forestall rejection, inspection should also include observation of the general maintenance of the device and of the proper functioning of all required elements. The official should look for worn or weakened mechanical parts, leaks in volumetric equipment, or elements in need of cleaning.

4.5. Misuse of Equipment. – Inspection, coupled with judicious inquiry, will sometimes disclose that equipment is being improperly used, either through ignorance of the proper method of operation or because some other method is preferred by the operator. Equipment should be operated only in the manner that is obviously indicated by its construction or that is indicated by instructions on the equipment, and operation in any other manner should be prohibited.

4.6. Recommendations. – A comprehensive knowledge of each installation will enable the official to make constructive recommendations to the equipment owner regarding proper maintenance of his weighing and measuring devices and the suitability of his equipment for the purposes for which it is being used or for which it is proposed that it be used. Such recommendations are always in order and may be very helpful to an owner. The official will, of course, carefully avoid partiality toward or against equipment of specific makes and will confine his recommendations to points upon which he is qualified, by knowledge and experience, to make suggestions of practical merit.

4.7. Accurate and Correct Equipment. – Finally, the weights and measures official is reminded that commercial equipment may be accurate without being correct. A piece of equipment is accurate when its performance or value (that is, its indications, its deliveries, its recorded representations, or its capacity or actual value, etc., as determined by tests made with suitable standards) conforms to the standard within the applicable tolerances and other performance requirements. Equipment that fails so to conform is inaccurate. A piece of equipment is correct when, in addition to being accurate, it meets all applicable specification requirements. Equipment that fails to meet any of the requirements for correct equipment is incorrect. Only equipment that is correct should be sealed and approved for commercial use.²

5. Correction of Commercial Equipment

5.1. Adjustable Elements. – Many types of weighing and measuring instruments are not susceptible to adjustment for accuracy by means of adjustable elements. Linear measures, liquid measures, graduates, measure-containers, milk and lubricating-oil bottles, farm milk tanks, dry measures, and some of the more simple types of scales are in this category. Other types (for example, taximeters and odometers and some metering devices) may be adjusted in the field, but only by changing certain parts such as gears in gear trains.

² See Section 1.10. General Code and Appendix D. Definitions.

Some types, of which fabric-measuring devices and cordage-measuring devices are examples, are not intended to be adjusted in the field and require reconditioning in shop or factory if inaccurate. Liquid-measuring devices and most scales are equipped with adjustable elements, and some vehicle-tank compartments have adjustable indicators. Field adjustments may readily be made on such equipment. In the discussion that follows, the principles pointed out and the recommendations made apply to adjustments on any commercial equipment, by whatever means accomplished.

5.2. When Corrections Should Be Made. – One of the primary duties of a weights and measures official is to determine whether equipment is suitable for commercial use. If a device conforms to all legal requirements, the official “marks” or “seals” it to indicate approval. If it does not conform to all official requirements, the official is required to take action to ensure that the device is corrected within a reasonable period of time. Devices with performance errors that could result in serious economic injury to either party in a transaction should be prohibited from use immediately and not allowed to be returned to service until necessary corrections have been made. The official should consider the most appropriate action, based on all available information and economic factors.

Some officials contend that it is justifiable for the official to make minor corrections and adjustments if there is no service agency nearby or if the owner or operator depends on this single device and would be “out of business” if the use of the device were prohibited until repairs could be made. Before adjustments are made at the request of the owner or the owner’s representative, the official should be confident that the problem is not due to faulty installation or a defective part, and that the adjustment will correct the problem. The official should never undertake major repairs, or even minor corrections, if services of commercial agencies are readily available. The official should always be mindful of conflicts of interest before attempting to perform any services other than normal device examination and testing duties.

(Amended 1995)

5.3. Gauging. – In the majority of cases, when the weights and measures official tests commercial equipment, he is verifying the accuracy of a value or the accuracy of the performance as previously established either by himself or by someone else. There are times, however, when the test of the official is the initial test on the basis of which the calibration of the device is first determined or its performance first established. The most common example of such gauging is in connection with vehicle tanks the compartments of which are used as measures. Frequently the official makes the first determination on the capacities of the compartments of a vehicle tank, and his test results are used to determine the proper settings of the compartment indicators for the exact compartment capacities desired. Adjustments of the position of an indicator under these circumstances are clearly not the kind of adjustments discussed in the preceding paragraph.

6. Rejection of Commercial Equipment

6.1. Rejection and Condemnation. – The Uniform Weights and Measures Law contains a provision stating that the director shall reject and order to be corrected such physical weights and measures or devices found to be incorrect. Weights and measures and devices that have been rejected, may be seized if not corrected within a reasonable time or if used or disposed of in a manner not specifically authorized. The director shall remove from service and may seize weights and measures found to be incorrect that are not capable of being made correct.

These broad powers should be used by the official with discretion. The director should always keep in mind the property rights of an equipment owner and cooperate in working out arrangements whereby an owner can realize at least something from equipment that has been rejected. In cases of doubt, the official should initially reject rather than condemn outright. Destruction and confiscation of equipment are harsh procedures. Power to seize and destroy is necessary for adequate control of extreme situations, but seizure and destruction should be resorted to only when clearly justified.

On the other hand, rejection is clearly inappropriate for many items of measuring equipment. This is true for most linear measures, many liquid and dry measures, graduates, measure-containers, milk bottles, lubricating-oil bottles, and some scales. When such equipment is “incorrect,” it is either impractical or impossible to adjust or repair it, and the official has no alternative to outright condemnation. When only a few such items are involved, immediate destruction or confiscation is probably the best procedure. If a considerable number of items are involved (as, for example, a stock of measures in the hands of a dealer or a large shipment of bottles), return of these to the manufacturer

for credit or replacement should ordinarily be permitted provided that the official is assured that they will not get into commercial use. In rare instances, confiscation and destruction are justified as a method of control when less harsh methods have failed.

In the case of incorrect mechanisms such as fabric-measuring devices, taximeters, liquid-measuring devices, and most scales, repair of the equipment is usually possible, so rejection is the customary procedure. Seizure may occasionally be justified, but in the large majority of instances this should be unnecessary. Even in the case of worn-out equipment, some salvage is usually possible, and this should be permitted under proper controls.

(Amended 1995)

7. Tagging of Equipment

7.1. Rejected and Condemned. – It will ordinarily be practicable to tag or mark as rejected each item of equipment found to be incorrect and considered susceptible of proper reconditioning. However, it can be considered justifiable not to mark as rejected incorrect devices capable of meeting acceptable performance requirements if they are to be allowed to remain in service for a reasonable time until minor problems are corrected since marks of rejection may tend to be misleading about a device’s ability to produce accurate measurements during the correction period. The tagging of equipment as condemned, or with a similar label to indicate that it is permanently out of service, is not recommended if there is any other way in which the equipment can definitely be put out of service. Equipment that cannot successfully be repaired should be dismantled, removed from the premises, or confiscated by the official rather than merely being tagged as “condemned.”

(Amended 1995)

7.2. Nonsealed and Noncommercial. – Rejection is not appropriate if measuring equipment cannot be tested by the official at the time of his regular visit—for example, when there is no gasoline in the supply tank of a gasoline-dispensing device. Some officials affix to such equipment a nonsealed tag stating that the device has not been tested and sealed and that it must not be used commercially until it has been officially tested and approved. This is recommended whenever considerable time will elapse before the device can be tested.

Where the official finds in the same establishment, equipment that is in commercial use and also equipment suitable for commercial use that is not presently in service, but which may be put into service at some future time, he may treat the latter equipment in any of the following ways:

- (a) Test and approve the same as commercial equipment in use.
- (b) Refrain from testing it and remove it from the premises to preclude its use for commercial purposes.
- (c) Mark the equipment nonsealed.

Where the official finds commercial equipment and noncommercial equipment installed or used in close proximity, he may treat the noncommercial equipment in any of the following ways:

- (a) Test and approve the same as commercial equipment.
- (b) Physically separate the two groups of equipment so that misuse of the noncommercial equipment will be prevented.
- (c) Tag it to show that it has not been officially tested and is not to be used commercially.

8. Records of Equipment

8.1. Records, General. - The official will be well advised to keep careful records of equipment that is rejected, so that he may follow up to ensure that the necessary repairs have been made. As soon as practicable following

completion of repairs, the equipment should be retested. Complete records should also be kept of equipment that has been tagged as nonsealed or noncommercial. Such records may be invaluable should it subsequently become necessary to take disciplinary steps because of improper use of such equipment.

9. Sealing of Equipment

9.1. Types of Seals and Their Locations. – Most weights and measures jurisdictions require that all equipment officially approved for commercial use (with certain exceptions to be pointed out later) be suitably marked or sealed to show approval. This is done primarily for the benefit of the public to show that such equipment has been officially examined and approved. The seal of approval should be as conspicuous as circumstances permit and should be of such a character and so applied that it will be reasonably permanent. Uniformity of position of the seal on similar types of equipment is also desirable as a further aid to the public.

The official will need more than one form of seal to meet the requirements of different kinds of equipment. Good quality, weather-resistant, water-adhesive, or pressure-sensitive seals or decalcomania seals are recommended for fabric-measuring devices, liquid-measuring devices, taximeters, and most scales, because of their permanence and good appearance. Steel stamps are most suitable for liquid and dry measures, for some types of linear measures, and for weights. An etched seal, applied with suitable etching ink, is excellent for steel tapes, and greatly preferable to a seal applied with a steel stamp. The only practicable seal for a graduate is one marked with a diamond or carbide pencil, or one etched with glass-marking ink. For a vehicle tank, the official may wish to devise a relatively large seal, perhaps of metal, with provision for stamping data relative to compartment capacities, the whole to be welded or otherwise permanently attached to the shell of the tank. In general, the lead-and-wire seal is not suitable as an approval seal.

9.2. Exceptions. – Commercial equipment such as measure-containers, milk bottles, and lubricating-oil bottles are not tested individually because of the time element involved. Because manufacturing processes for these items are closely controlled, an essentially uniform product is produced by each manufacturer. The official normally tests samples of these items prior to their sale within his jurisdiction and subsequently makes spot checks by testing samples selected at random from new stocks.

Another exception to the general rule for sealing approved equipment is found in certain very small weights whose size precludes satisfactory stamping with a steel die.

10. Rounding Off Numerical Values

10.1. Definition. – To round off or round a numerical value is to change the value of recorded digits to some other value considered more desirable for the purpose at hand by dropping or changing certain figures. For example, if a computed, observed, or accumulated value is 4738, this can be rounded off to the nearest thousand, hundred, or ten, as desired. Such rounded-off values would be, respectively, 5000, 4700, and 4740. Similarly, a value such as 47.382 can be rounded off to two decimal places, to one decimal place, or to the units place. The rounded-off figures in this example would be, respectively, 47.38, 47.4, and 47.

10.2. General Rules. – The general rules for rounding off may be stated briefly as follows:

- (a) When the figure next beyond the last figure or place to be retained is less than 5, the figure in the last place retained is to be kept unchanged. When rounding off 4738 to the nearest hundred, it is noted that the figure 3 (next beyond the last figure to be retained) is less than 5. Thus, the rounded-off value would be 4700. Likewise, 47.382 rounded to two decimal places becomes 47.38.
- (b) When the figure next beyond the last figure or place to be retained is greater than 5, the figure in the last place retained is to be increased by 1. When rounding off 4738 to the nearest thousand, it is noted that the figure 7 (next beyond the last figure to be retained) is greater than 5. Thus, the rounded-off value would be 5000. Likewise, 47.382 rounded to one decimal place becomes 47.4.

- (c) When the figure next beyond the last figure to be retained is 5 followed by any figures other than zero(s), treat as in (b) above; that is, the figure in the last place retained is to be increased by 1. When rounding off 4501 to the nearest thousand, 1 is added to the thousands figure and the result becomes 5000.
- (d) When the figure next beyond the last figure to be retained is 5 and there are no figures, or only zeros, beyond this 5, the figure in the last place to be retained is to be left unchanged if it is even (0, 2, 4, 6, or 8) and is to be increased by 1 if it is odd (1, 3, 5, 7, or 9). This is the odd and even rule, and may be stated as follows: “If odd, then add.” Thus, rounding off to the first decimal place, 47.25 would become 47.2 and 47.15 would become 47.2. Also, rounded to the nearest thousand, 4500 would become 4000 and 1500 would become 2000.

It is important to remember that, when there are two or more figures to the right of the place where the last significant figure of the final result is to be, the entire series of such figures must be rounded off in one step and not in two or more successive rounding steps. [Expressed differently, when two or more such figures are involved, these are not to be rounded off individually, but are to be rounded off as a group.] Thus, when rounding off 47.3499 to the first decimal place, the result becomes 47.3. In arriving at this result, the figures “499” are treated as a group. Since the 4 next beyond the last figure to be retained is less than 5, the “499” is dropped (see subparagraph (a) above). It would be incorrect to round off these figures successively to the left so that 47.3499 would become 47.350 and then 47.35 and then 47.4.

10.3. Rules for Reading of Indications. – An important aspect of rounding off values is the application of these rules to the reading of indications of an indicator-and-graduated-scale combination (where the majority of the indications may be expected to lie somewhere between two graduations) if it is desired to read or record values only to the nearest graduation. Consider a vertical graduated scale and an indicator. Obviously, if the indicator is between two graduations but is closer to one graduation than it is to the other adjacent graduation, the value of the closer graduation is the one to be read or recorded.

In the case where, as nearly as can be determined, the indicator is midway between two graduations, the odd-and-even rule is invoked, and the value to be read or recorded is that of the graduation whose value is even. For example, if the indicator lies exactly midway between two graduations having values of 471 and 472, respectively, the indication should be read or recorded as 472, this being an even value. If midway between graduations having values of 474 and 475, the even value 474 should be read or recorded. Similarly, if the two graduations involved had values of 470 and 475, the even value of 470 should be read or recorded.

A special case not covered by the foregoing paragraph is that of a graduated scale in which successive graduations are numbered by twos, all graduations thus having even values; for example, 470, 472, 474, etc. When, in this case, an indication lies midway between two graduations, the recommended procedure is to depart from the practice of reading or recording only to the value of the nearest graduation and to read or record the intermediate odd value. For example, an indication midway between 470 and 472 should be read as 471.

10.4. Rules for Common Fractions. – When applying the rounding-off rules to common fractions, the principles are to be applied to the numerators of the fractions that have, if necessary, been reduced to a common denominator. The principle of “5s” is changed to the one-half principle; that is, add if more than one-half, drop if less than one-half, and apply the odd-and even rule if exactly one-half.

For example, a series of values might be $1\frac{1}{32}$, $1\frac{2}{32}$, $1\frac{3}{32}$, $1\frac{4}{32}$, $1\frac{5}{32}$, $1\frac{6}{32}$, $1\frac{7}{32}$, $1\frac{8}{32}$, $1\frac{9}{32}$. Assume that these values are to be rounded off to the nearest eighth ($\frac{4}{32}$). Then,

$1\frac{1}{32}$ becomes 1. ($\frac{1}{32}$ is less than half of $\frac{4}{32}$ and accordingly is dropped.)

$1\frac{2}{32}$ becomes 1. ($\frac{2}{32}$ is exactly one-half of $\frac{4}{32}$; it is dropped because it is rounded (down) to the “even” eighth, which in this instance is $\frac{0}{8}$.)

$1\frac{3}{32}$ becomes $1\frac{4}{32}$ or $1\frac{1}{8}$. ($\frac{3}{32}$ is more than half of $\frac{4}{32}$, and accordingly is rounded “up” to $\frac{4}{32}$ or $\frac{1}{8}$.)

$1\frac{4}{32}$ remains unchanged, being an exact eighth ($1\frac{1}{8}$).

$1^{5/32}$ becomes $1^{4/32}$ or $1^{1/8}$. ($^{5/32}$ is $^{1/32}$ more than an exact $^{1/8}$; $^{1/32}$ is less than half of $^{4/32}$ and accordingly is dropped.)

$1^{6/32}$ becomes $1^{2/8}$ or $1^{1/4}$. ($^{6/32}$ is $^{2/32}$ more than an exact $^{1/8}$; $^{2/32}$ is exactly one-half of $^{4/32}$, and the final fraction is rounded (up) to the “even” eighth, which in this instance is $^{2/8}$.)

$1^{7/32}$ becomes $1^{2/8}$ or $1^{1/4}$. ($^{7/32}$ is $^{3/32}$ more than an exact $^{1/8}$; $^{3/32}$ is more than one-half of $^{4/32}$ and accordingly the final fraction is rounded (up) to $^{2/8}$ or $^{1/4}$.)

$1^{8/32}$ remains unchanged, being an exact eighth ($1^{2/8}$ or $1^{1/4}$.)

$1^{9/32}$ becomes $1^{2/8}$ or $1^{1/4}$. ($^{9/32}$ is $^{1/32}$ more than an exact $^{1/8}$; $^{1/32}$ is less than half of $^{4/32}$ and accordingly is dropped.)