

The California Gold Rush—Part 2



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You may not have noticed but there is a second gold rush currently taking

place. Unlike the 1849 original, this one involves people offering to buy your unwanted gold for cash. Given the tough economic times we are in and the fact that gold is trading at over \$1,100 per troy ounce, this can be seen as a way of getting some extra cash. But as with all transactions where money exchanges hands, you want to be cautious and make sure you are getting full value for your gold.



Weights and Measures “weighs in” on this issue if a scale is being used to determine the amount of money that will be paid for the gold. If this is the case, the scale must meet certain requirements and it must be tested and sealed by a Weights and Measures Official.



These requirements include that the scale being used for this commercial transaction is “type approved”. This means the scale has undergone evaluation and testing by a certified laboratory to substantiate accuracy under the conditions in which it will be used. For scales, evaluation often involves weight being placed on and removed from the scale over 100,000 times. In California, type approval can either be through the California State Metrology Laboratory’s California Type Evaluation Program (CTEP) or through the National Type Evaluation Program (NTEP).

Once it is determined that the scale is legal for trade, it must be tested and sealed by Weights and Measures. If the scale has been inspected by Weights and Measures, it should have a current year’s seal displayed where the customer can see it.

During the transaction, the gold should be weighed in front of the seller and the seller must be able to see the scale display indicating the amount of weight.

If someone is offering to buy your gold across a scale that does not display a Weights and Measures seal of



inspection, your best course of action is to walk away and find a purchaser who is following the law.

During the course of the past year, we became aware of a number of vendors who were using untested scales. By bringing these scales

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into compliance, the number of jewelry scales registered in Stanislaus County has risen from 5 in the beginning of 2009 to 27 registered currently.

If you come across an unsealed scale being used to purchase gold, please contact our office at (209) 525-4730.