MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 15, 2010

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Lew C. Bauman
County Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: County Administrative Officer’s Report for the week of November 15, 2010

In this week’s edition: Holiday shopping tips from the Weights and Measures Unit of the Ag Commissioners Department, the tallying continues in the Election Department and the UC Cooperative Extension is sharing its environmental expertise with golf course managers.

**Agricultural Commissioner**

The Weights and Measures unit of the Agricultural Commissioner’s office works year round protecting consumers by making sure we get what we pay for at locations such as the gas pump, taxi stand and cash register. But when it comes to the busiest shopping season of the year, the Agricultural Commissioner’s office is urging holiday shoppers to be aware of the prices they are being charged at the cash register and to check their receipts for overcharges.

Did you know that Weights and Measures inspectors have found price scanner errors in more than half of the stores they inspected?

Over the last four years the Monterey County Weights and Measures Unit has scanned over 13,038 items at 342 locations, and found that 52% of the stores inspected for pricing accuracy had at least one overcharge and 28% had two or more. Shoppers are more likely to be overcharged than undercharged on purchased items.

“During these tough economic times when every dollar counts, you should know the price of the item you’re buying before you check out,” said Eric Lauritzen, County Sealer of Weights and Measures. “Shoppers should pay no more than the lowest advertised, posted or quoted price.”
Overcharges are more likely to occur on sale price items because the store’s scanners are sometimes not updated with the lower price.

Lauritzen suggests shoppers bring holiday ads along to double check prices that seem wrong.

Some other important tips for shoppers:

* Stores are required to position a price display so that it is visible to you when items are being scanned.

* Verify receipts and notify store management of any price discrepancies.

* If a sale shelf tag is posted, the store must honor the posted price, even if the date of the sale has passed.

* To report a complaint, contact Monterey County Weights and Measures, located within the Agricultural Commissioner’s office at (831) 759-7382.

**Elections**

November 2, 2010 Statewide General - Official Canvass: The Department commenced the official canvass last Wednesday, November 3rd – with over 40,000 ballots left to count, there is no time to waste! However, with election night lasting into the morning hours on Wednesday, the day was a light day for most of the staff, working only a short-shift in order to catch up on much needed rest. State law provides a 28-day period to complete the official canvass of the vote and produce a final certified statement.

The Department has posted two updates to the semi final official results, each occurring on a Friday afternoon as the reporting schedule indicated. Two weeks into the official canvass, the Department has completed many of the requirements, including reconciliation of voting materials, verification of all mail returns, and scanning of the roster indexes to capture voter history.

This week, the Department will continue working on the manual tally; continue reviewing, duplicating and remaking otherwise unreadable ballots to capture voter intent and validation of provisional ballots. An additional result update will occur this coming Friday, November 19, which should include all remaining vote by mail ballots and provisional ballots. Any additional vote update the week of Thanksgiving would include tabulation and reporting of the remaining provisional and duplicated ballots.

On Monday, November 8, the Department conducted the random draw of precincts for the required manual tally of results. In the end, a total of 18 precincts were selected, two in order to meet 1% of the total precincts in Monterey County (183), with additional precincts selected to capture contests not available in the original 1%. In addition, the Department will also conduct a 100% tally of all votes cast on all touch-screen voting machines used in the election.
Visit the Department's website (www.montereycountyelections.us) for a schedule of other canvass activities and to access the updated semi-final official results. The final certification must occur no later than Tuesday, November 30, with a production of a certified Statement of the Vote, which will include a brief report on the outcome of the manual tally, as well as the final tally of any valid write-in votes.

Election Officers: Once again, the Department would like to thank all County employees who participated in this November's election. Reports reflect it was busier in some areas more than others and certainly more than expected – precincts borrowed spare voting materials from neighbors! In the end, the day went well - a true testament to TEAM WORK and going the extra mile for the voters in Monterey County.

Payroll is complete and was turned over to the Auditor-Controller to process. As a reminder, the Election Officer stipend is included IN your biweekly county paycheck (county workers do not receive a separate check for the stipend).

Cooperative Extension
Golf courses cover many acres in Monterey County.

A workshop featuring University of California scientists will inform golf course superintendents about the latest practices in preserving water and soil, and how to mitigate impacts on the environment.

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California (GCSANC) in conjunction with the University of California Cooperative Extension will host its 30th institute and trade show on November 15-16 at Carmel Valley Ranch. This educational conference, titled "Resource Management for Golf and the Environment: Doing More with Less in Changing Times" will feature industry experts discussing ways to conserve resources while maximizing operational efficiency.

According to Institute Co-Chairman and UC Cooperative Extension advisor Ali Harivandi, Ph.D. and Co Chairman Rodney Muller, conference topics will span everything from managing key resources such as water and power to studying successful recycling programs that branch out to all operational components within a golf facility.

#-----------------------------------------------#