

Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: Do your homework for back-to-school shopping success

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MADISON - Mid-July. Summer sun. Cold drinks. Sandy beaches. 64-packs of crayons.

Wake up! It's back-to-school shopping season again!

Each year this shopping event seems to come earlier, and this summer is no exception. The shelves are stocked and the newspaper inserts are hitting doorsteps. To make sure you get your money's worth at the register, take these tips from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) along with your shopping list.

"Whether you are in the market for flip-flops or laptops, notepads or padlocks, there is a sale somewhere geared toward your student's needs," said Frank Frassetto, Division Administrator for Trade and Consumer Protection. "Discounted prices will cross a wide range of products and specific sales terms may apply, so pay close attention at the register to ensure that you receive the advertised prices for your items."

Follow these simple tips to ensure that you are charged correctly:

- Before setting out for your shopping run, review the advertisements for restrictions on quantities, sale hours, returns and rain checks. Check store policies on price matching to consolidate your run.
- Write down prices or special sales while you shop to have a better sense of the final

total before you hit the register. Most pricing errors occur on sale items.

- Keep an eye on the display screen while your items are being scanned. Speak up if you think you have been overcharged for an item.
- If there is a pricing error, Wisconsin law requires that a store refund any overcharge. Work with customer service to receive a refund while you are in the store. Double check your receipt before you leave to ensure that the totals are correct.
- Report pricing errors to state or local inspectors. To file a weights and measures complaint with DATCP's Weights and Measures Bureau, send an e-mail to datcpweightsandmeasures@wi.gov or call [608-224-4942](tel:608-224-4942).
- When you are finished shopping, save your receipts and submit any rebates immediately.

Every year DATCP's Weights and Measures team visits stores statewide to test for price accuracy, and the results show that consumers pay correct prices at Wisconsin stores an overwhelming majority of the time. In 2016, DATCP inspectors tested more than 58,000 items for price accuracy and found that prices registered accurately or in the consumers' favor nearly 99% of the time. Even so, it doesn't hurt to keep these back-to-school shopping tips in mind during this busy shopping season.

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