

Policies and Procedures for Testing Pressure Canner Gauges

The Office of the Attorney General at WSU Pullman has reviewed potential liability issues connected with Extension testing pressure canner gauges. Many county offices have provided this service to the public for years. Because improper pressure canning can result in severe illness or death, we wanted to insure that our policies around testing were sound.

The Assumption of Risk Form <http://ext.wsu.edu/admin/PDF/assumptionofrisk.pdf> should be used in all county offices that are continuing to test pressure canner gauges. The policy is as follows:

- The owner of the pressure canner must be the one who signs the release form.
- Duplicate copies of the form should be signed and the office should keep a copy for at least six (6) years.
- Fees should be charged for testing pressure canner gauges. The fee should be sufficient to cover the cost of one or two canning bulletins to assure that home canners have the most recent versions of the bulletins. One of these should be the bulletin "Using and Caring for your Pressure Canner" (unless the client already owns that bulletin).

Your office has the option of no longer testing pressure canner gauges. If you do choose to continue testing, we recommend that your office purchase the version of National Presto Industries testing unit for dial gauges, which uses an air pump and master gauge. The fees for testing pressure canner gauges can be set to include funds for cost recovery of the unit's purchase. One disadvantage with the new air pump gauge tester is that it will only test Presto canners. However, it is more accurate and safer to use than Presto's older testing unit which uses steam.