

# Coti Global Sensors

Issue No. 3 | Third Quarter - 2025

**WEIGHS IN**



## The Wonderful Splash of Water

We overlook water—until we're parched. But hydration isn't just survival; it's a subtle performance enhancement. Think about it: your brain is 75% water, so that morning fog just might be dehydration.

In our busy worlds- where we are caffeinated and distracted—staying “hydrated” may be the simplest life upgrade we can make. Sure- it doesn't taste as good as that latte—but it's miraculous! Science backs it, and every cell in your body silently begs for it. Yet most of us walk around like wilted houseplants.

This short dive (pun intended) is a reminder of how the most ordinary substance on Earth might be the secret to feeling extraordinary. Drink up. You're more water than you think!

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### Being Prepared for Tornadoes

They can come—seemingly out of the blue—and they move very fast once on the ground. Take shelter if your local weather person says there's a tornado warning for your area. If your street is inside the polygon of danger, go to your safe spot—you don't want to become part of the debris cloud! In this article, you'll learn how to be prepared—business-wise and otherwise.

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### Coti Global's Co-op Star

Sometimes Charlie Crabb plays his guitar on the front porch—but he's no pop star. He's a Co-op star. This story highlights the talent emerging from our local schools. Many high schools and colleges offer co-op programs that let manufacturers evaluate potential hires in real work environments. You'll hear about the smashing success Coti Global had participating in the co-op program—and meet the star himself.

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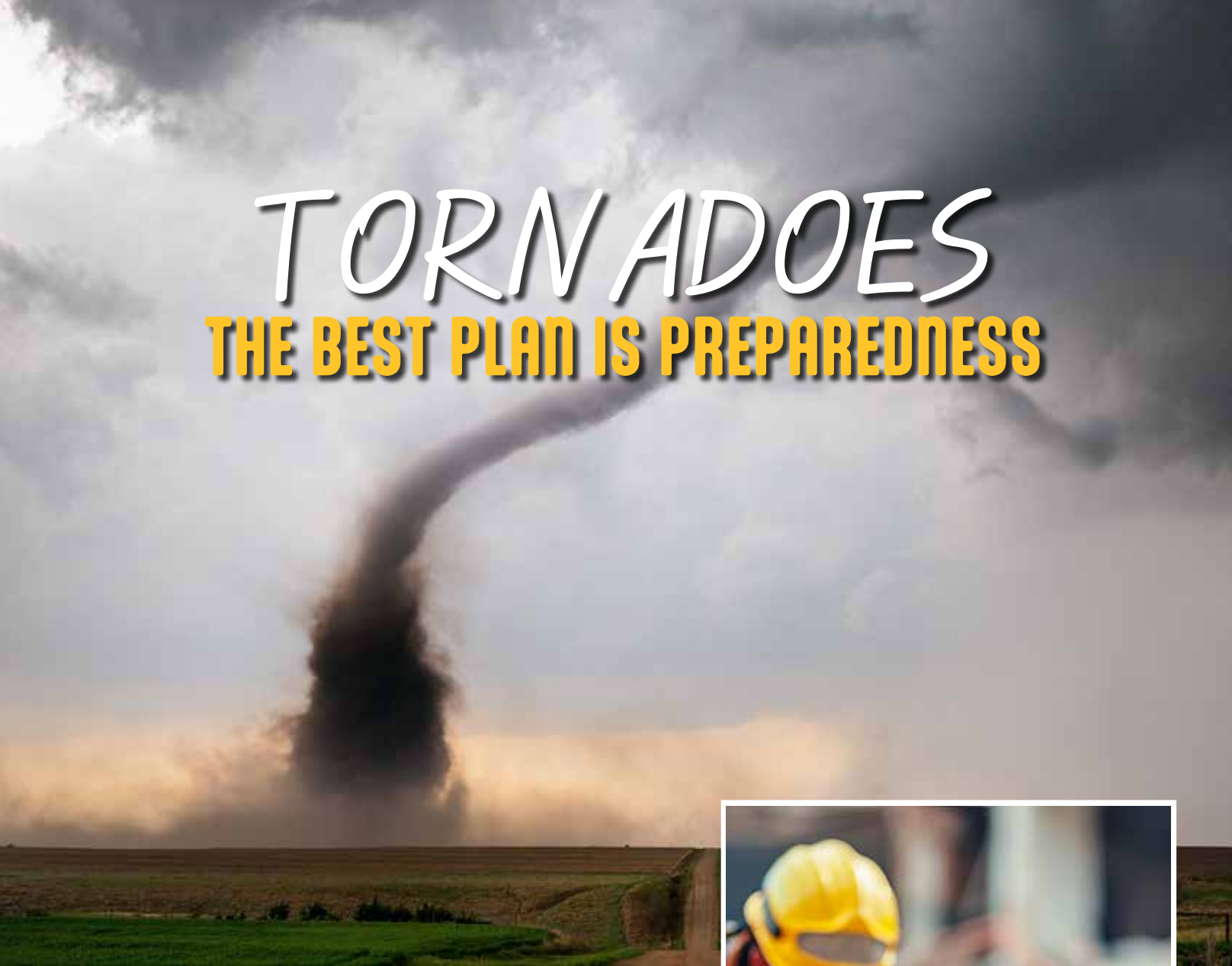
### CSR is Really About Corporate Volunteerism

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) might sound formal, but at its heart, it's all about companies giving back—whether locally or globally—through volunteerism. We spoke with Melanie Luckey, a member of Tennessee's Corporate Social Purpose Network, who believes strongly in how CSR can benefit everyone.



# TORNADOES

## THE BEST PLAN IS PREPAREDNESS



Most disasters, like fires, hurricanes and floods, strike specific geographical areas. However, there is one natural disaster that can quickly affect multiple areas along a moving front. With the right conditions, a wall cloud can form, its swirling winds can spit out a funnel — turning tornadic when it touches the ground. It's like the devil setting the needle down on vinyl (and brick) to play AC/DC's "Highway to Hell."

A tornado will travel fast, unlike its larger counterpart, the hurricane, which also makes it harder to track. Many tornadoes are only radar-indicated, meaning forecasters can't always confirm whether they've actually touched down or not. Warning times are short, and they vary depending on where you are along the storm's path.

For most people in London, Kentucky, it was just another night. Folks were getting ready for bed — brushing their teeth or dozing off to late-night TV — when, unbeknownst to them, the skies over-



head began to churn. The wind had a different tone, and the radar lit up in ways that made even seasoned storm chasers sit forward in their seats. A tornado had already done major damage in St. Louis, Missouri, earlier that afternoon, but folks in London had no idea what was about to come down on them.

Ryan Hall, a YouTube livestream weather guru, was busy tracking multiple storm warnings, and by 10:45 p.m., the atmosphere was getting seriously turbulent. While monitoring the radar, he spotted a hook echo forming near Somerset, Kentucky, and said it looked like it could turn into a significant tornado. He was covering several warning polygons at the time, so he briefly switched away to check on the others. When he came back to the Somerset polygon, his eyebrows went up with worried surprise.

"Oh my gosh — look at that. The dadgum thing has an eye, and we've got a debris ball too." He was really concerned that there was a huge tornado on the ground doing violent damage at that very moment. "Take shelter, everyone, if you're in this area."

His warning proved right. A violent EF4 tornado carved a 60-mile path from Somerset through London, staying on the ground for nearly 90 minutes. Homes were wiped clean from their foundations, and in London's Sunshine Hills subdivision, 17 people lost their lives.

May 16, 2025, was etched in the ground that day like an epitaph viewable by satellite. According to the National Weather Service damage survey, the tornado was nearly a mile wide, with estimated winds reaching 170 miles per hour.

### Four Days Later

It was just another Tuesday morning in Alabama, with local channels covering news and weather. Several Southern states were highlighted in the orange zone for the risk of severe storms.

Storm forecasts are common — espe-



cially in the South — so people often tune them out, caught up in their routines or dismissing the threat.

Again, some YouTube weather livestream personalities were on air around 3 p.m., knowing there was a good chance of a tornado out-

By 6:30 p.m., Hall was already tracking suspicious radar activity near northern Alabama, zeroing in on an area just outside Huntsville where wind shear was starting to appear on radar. An hour later, his concerns were confirmed.

An EF2 tornado, with peak winds of 125 mph, touched down south-east of Athens in Limestone County, near Tanner, and whipped along a 13-mile path through eastern Madison County. It passed just north of Huntsville, damaging trees and structures along the way. Coti Global Sensors is located between Huntsville and Ardmore off Highway 53. While the tornado didn't directly hit the facility, many employees were already home, sheltering in place as the storm passed dangerously close. This was just one of 14 tornadoes that hit northern Alabama that day.

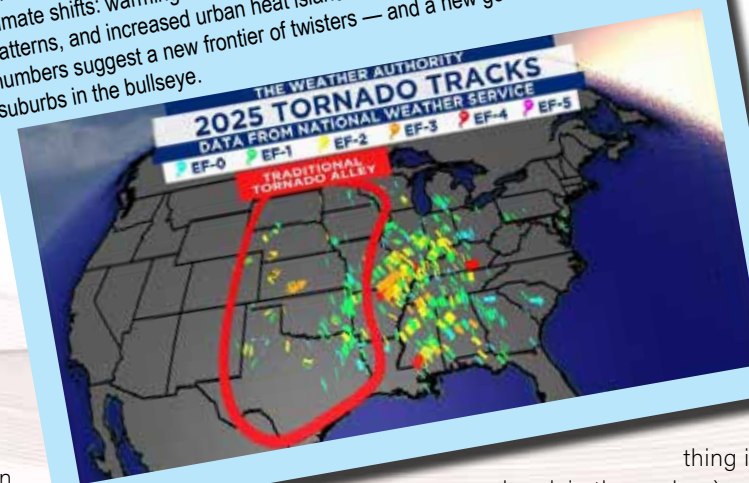
### Emerging From Disaster

As the tornado carves out the earth, the screeching, whirling sound of metal, wood and glass — every-

thing in your house (and the one next door) — crashing into your "safe place" must be terrifying. No wonder people stumble dazed through the rubble that once felt secure — now just broken brick waiting to trip them up.

### Why Tornado Alley is Expanding East

Traditionally, "Tornado Alley" was the wide-open plains of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Iowa, and Nebraska, where storm chasers could be found tearing down two-lane roads. But recent data shows a new pattern: the most active tornado zones are expanding eastward into states like Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana and even parts of Ohio. The reason? A cocktail of climate shifts: warming Gulf moisture pushing further north, changes in jet stream patterns, and increased urban heat islands. While Kansas still gets its share, the numbers suggest a new frontier of twisters — and a new generation of unprepared suburbs in the bullseye.



break in the tornado alley of the South. Teams of storm chasers were in place — spread out across the high-risk zones — eyes to the sky.



# TORNADOES

The storm is over, and soon the cleanup and rebuilding begin — as those who've weathered it emerge stronger in character, grateful simply to be alive.

The stories we just read bring to mind total destruction, which will take months — and even years, in some cases — to rebuild. But wherever the tornado cut its path, let's remember there are edges. Those homes and businesses on the edge sustained less damage and can more quickly be operational again.

## Scale Equipment After the Storm

For businesses, restoring scale systems is a critical step toward getting back to work. Getting these systems inspected, repaired and certified quickly isn't just about keeping things moving; it's about helping businesses regain their footing.

After a storm, scale equipment may look intact, but hidden damage is common. Water intrusion, power surges, debris impact and structural shifting can all interfere with accuracy and safety. Electrical surges in particular — often caused by lightning or downed power lines — can silently damage sensitive components like indicators and load cells, sometimes without leaving a visible trace.

According to Tori Smitherman of Tuscaloosa Scale Company, "We typically run into lightning damage to boards, load cells and the computer systems that operate the scales. Once we encounter these issues, if able, we offer the option to the customer to replace it with equipment that has some lightning protection. The goal is to lower the risk of the problem being repeated." She added that while they haven't seen anything unusual, "there's lots of damage from wind and water," and that sometimes water "washes a lot of dirt and debris under/on the scale, causing it to weigh incorrectly."

Leann Mashburn, CEO of Scaleman of Tennessee, noted that "low-voltage damage seems to be the most typical damage found during storms. Digital weight indicators, junction boxes and load cells are hit by lightning and need to be repaired or replaced."

Getting scale equipment back online is often one of the last steps in a long recovery process, but it plays a vital role in helping operations resume. For agricultural, industrial and logistics-based



businesses, downtime means lost revenue. Service teams work fast to source replacement parts, repair the equipment and get the customer weighing again.

"We often try to make sure that we have the replacement parts for our customers in case they are to receive damage," said Smitherman. "Often, we wait for customers to contact us, since storm severity can vary greatly by location."

In some cases, scale providers are among the earliest to assist. Mashburn recalled how her company supported local facilities when their county was hit by a tornado in 2023: "Some of our customers' facilities suffered major damage. We were

fortunate to be able to help these facilities with scales until they could get back up and running properly."

## Storm Preparation Matters

While no one can predict exactly when a storm will strike, both end users and service providers can take steps to be better prepared. When the risk is high in a particular area, Mashburn said they adjust a technician's schedule to keep them out of the high-risk zone. "Our best protocol is for them to get to a safe location and stay in contact with us, so we can ensure their safety," she said.

For businesses that rely on

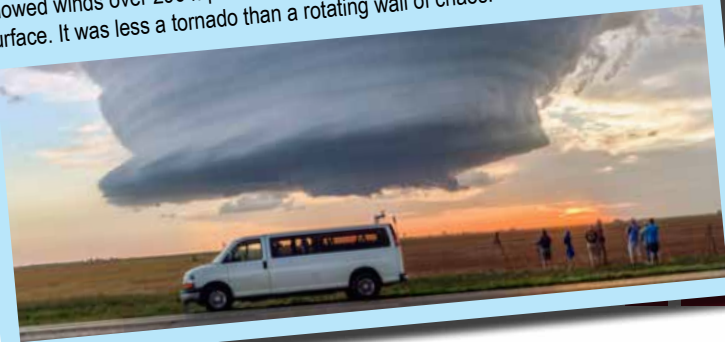
### The World's Biggest Hailstones

On July 23, 2010, a hailstone fell near Vivian, South Dakota, that rewrote the record books. It measured eight inches in diameter, weighed nearly two pounds, and had the circumference of a volleyball. That's not hail—that is a weapon. It formed in an updraft so powerful that it likely held the ice aloft for more than thirty minutes, freezing layer by layer before gravity finally won. The impact velocity? About 100 miles per hour.



### The Monster of El Reno

On May 31, 2013, near El Reno, Oklahoma, a tornado formed that would stretch 2.6 miles across—wider than Manhattan. It lasted only 40 minutes but was so erratic and fast (with ground speeds over 60 mph) that even seasoned storm chasers were caught off guard. One noted researcher, Tim Samaras, lost his life, along with his son and his chase partner Carl Young during the event, highlighting the growing risks of modern storm pursuit. Though officially rated EF3, radar data showed winds over 296 mph at times — the strongest ever recorded near Earth's surface. It was less a tornado than a rotating wall of chaos.



## Notable Tornadoes as of June 2025

As of mid-June, more than 1,000 tornadoes have been recorded across the U.S., with the most severe impacts in Arkansas, Alabama, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, and Texas. At least 69 lives have been lost—and with the peak of tornado season still ahead, the toll may rise. Texas alone has reported 136 tornadoes, underscoring the relentlessness of this year's outbreaks.

The following are among the most severe tornadoes recorded so far in 2025; with peak season still ahead, more are expected.

- **March 14** (evening): An EF4 tornado with peak winds near 170 mph carved a 119-mile path through Fifty-Six and Franklin, Arkansas, before crossing into Missouri. Though no fatalities were reported, the tornado caused significant injuries and destruction in mostly rural areas.



- **April 3** (early morning): Two EF3 tornadoes struck Selmer, Tennessee, in rapid succession, with a third unconfirmed tornado passing just north of town. The storms killed five people in Selmer and nearby McNairy County, injured 14, and destroyed or damaged nearly 180 homes. Estimated damages topped \$30 million.

- **May 16** (afternoon): In St. Louis, Missouri, an EF3 tornado with 152 mph winds killed five people and injured at least 38. It skirted dense urban areas, leaving behind \$1.6 billion in damage.

- **May 16** (overnight): An EF4 tornado tore a nearly 60-mile path through London, Kentucky, killing 19 people and injuring dozens more. Visible from space, it remains one of the year's deadliest storms.

- **May 18** (late night): An EF3 tornado with winds up to 155 mph hit Plevna, Kansas, just before midnight. Despite widespread structural damage, no fatalities or injuries were reported—largely due to timely warnings and residents seeking shelter.

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Slightly Radioactive

Bananas contain potassium-40, a naturally radioactive isotope. Don't panic—you'd need to eat about ten million at once for it to matter. So peel and enjoy, but maybe steer clear of Geiger counters.



scales daily, even small steps can help prevent serious storm damage. Mashburn emphasized that while preparation isn't always possible, proactive measures still matter: "With the unpredictable weather in our area, it is hard to always be prepared for these types of storms. However, we do encourage our customers to unplug equipment, especially low-voltage equipment, due to lightning damage that can occur during storms."

For dealers, it's good practice to have storm-readiness kits, including spare indicators, load cells, junction boxes and cables. Indicators are often the most vulnerable to surge-related failures, so having extras on hand, ready to install, helps speed up response time and gets customers up and running when every hour counts.

## Tornado Myths That Refuse to Die

### Myth #1:

*"Open your windows to equalize the pressure."*

**Wrong.** Tornadoes don't explode houses due to pressure differences — they rip them apart with wind and debris.

### Myth #2:

*"Tornadoes don't strike cities."*

**They do.** Just ask the residents of Dallas (2019), Nashville (2020), or St. Louis (2025). Concrete doesn't deflect storms — it just makes cleanup messier.

### Myth #3:

*"Overpasses are safe shelters."*

**They're death traps.** Wind actually accelerates as it funnels under the overpass, and debris gets concentrated. Several fatalities in past storms happened precisely because people took shelter under them.

### Myth #4:

*"Tornadoes always move west to east."*

**Mostly — but not always.** Some zig, stall, or do complete loops. That unpredictability is why meteorologists still lose sleep during outbreak season.



# Coti Global Finds a Star in Its First Co-op

In early 2023, as a junior in high school, Charlie Crabb stepped into the scale industry through a co-op program that paired him with a load cell manufacturing company. That first day, in his pack was a spiral notebook, which quickly became filled with notes about everything load cell related. According to Ashley Thomas, president of Coti Global Sensors, “He was like a little sponge and wanted to learn everything. He did take notes, but he also repeated tasks over and over again until he learned how to do it himself.”

In the repair and RXR scale production facility, Misty Finley, senior operations manager, agreed and added, “Charlie took it upon himself to learn things. He would go to the people in each department and ask them questions – he wanted to know how things moved along in the process.”

What began as a semester-long co-op working 20 hours a week, continued through to his graduation in May 2024, and by June he was offered a full-time job from Coti Global Sensors. Today, Charlie is a full-time load cell technician though that title falls way short of his capabilities.

### Co-ops Lead to Opportunity

Denise Allen, cooperative education coordinator at Madison County Career Technical Center, oversaw Charlie's



participation. She described co-op as “a great program that allows students real-world experience to help with career decisions, develop employability skills, and build stronger résumés and references.”



The co-op is an elective course offered through the Alabama State Department of Education, available to students in their junior or senior year. “Students are responsible for securing a job before the semester begins. It gives them real experience speaking with HR and other professionals,” Allen said. Because many students are paid by the companies they co-op with – while also earning high school credit – the program has adopted the motto: “Earn and Learn.”

### Why Employers Invest in Co-ops

For companies, co-ops aren't just about filling temporary roles – they're a smart way to build a pipeline of future talent. Instead of a quick internship, employers get months to see how a student fits in, learns, and grows. That kind of long-term engagement lowers hiring risks and often leads to stronger hires.

Co-op students also bring fresh energy, curiosity, and up-to-date learning skills from the classroom. And because they're motivated to prove themselves, they often exceed employers' expectations.

### The Future Made Clear

Charlie discovered early in his co-op that he wanted to stay in the scale industry. What began as a summer job in 2022 – doing clean-out and grunt work – quickly became something more, something he couldn't shake.

“I got really involved over that first summer working here,” he recalls, “and that led to me wanting to work here more. The only way for me to work more was co-op.”

That might sound unremarkable – a teenager choosing to spend more time around precision load cells and calibration

equipment – but it reflects something deeper: a young person not just preparing for adulthood, but stepping into it early, with intent. The co-op was his ticket to get his foot in the door.

For Charlie, the experience didn't just confirm an interest – it accelerated it. What began as curiosity quickly grew into confidence and capability – thanks in part to the people who were training him. Finley echoed that sentiment: “This industry is kind of like the medical field – the sky's the limit no matter where you start. I challenged Charlie – he chose to apply it.”

That kind of clarity – the kind usually reserved for people twice his age – didn't come from a textbook. It came from wiring load cells, checking tolerance levels, making real decisions in real time, and being surrounded by people who trusted him to figure it out.

### Finding More Than a Job

What Charlie found at Coti Global wasn't just a place to work – it was a team that cared about growth. During his co-op, he saw what a close-knit, customer-focused group could accomplish. “Everyone looked out for each other,” he says. That stuck with him.

Now, as a full-time employee in charge of testing and calibration, Charlie checks what comes in for repair and signs off on what goes out. He's also responsible for testing and calibrating Coti Global's new rail scales, load cells, and any custom scales that come into the shop.

“I really enjoy the team aspect and how we support each other,” he says. “And I like all the knowledge I'm surrounded by – and the experience being passed down to me.”

Finley isn't just his boss – she champions that mindset. “The future of our industry is our youth – I want to give Charlie everything he needs to succeed in this business. I tell him there's more to this industry than these four walls. You keep learning, and there's no limit to what you can do,” she said.

### Opening the Door

And while Charlie's path may be unique, it shouldn't be rare. For companies in the scale industry – and manufacturing as a whole – co-op programs offer a direct line

to the next generation of skilled, motivated workers. There are students out there who would thrive in this field. They just need a door to walk through.

## A Day in the Life of Charlie Crabb

### What's a typical weekend look like when you're not working?

*I really enjoy being on the water or outdoors when I can be, and I also enjoy tinkering with my personal projects.*

### How would your friends describe you?

*I think they would say I'm a laid-back, go-with-the-flow kind of person.*

### What's something you really enjoy that might surprise people?

*I'm pretty much an open book, but people might be surprised by how much I love and appreciate music.*

### What's something most people don't know about you?

*Kind of carrying on from the last question—I like to sing and play guitar.*

### What always makes you laugh, no matter what?

*Any story Greg tells at lunch is guaranteed to make me laugh. Whether I'm having a great day or not, I can always count on one of his stories to cheer me up.*

### What kind of influence has your family had on you?

*While my family isn't perfect, they've always instilled the importance of hard work. They taught me to have pride in my work, and to give your all to the job—whether it's big or small.*

**Note:** Charlie's dad and aunt also work at Coti Global, making the company a part of more than just his career—it's family.





# Coti Global Sensors

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## INDUSTRY Highlights

### Scale Manufacturers Association

#### The SMA 2025 Fall Meeting in Lincoln, Nebraska

The Scale Manufacturers Association will hold its Fall 2025 Meeting in Lincoln, Nebraska, beginning early Wednesday, Nov. 5, and ending midday Thursday, Nov. 6. The meeting will be held at the Courtyard by Marriott Lincoln Downtown, 806 R Street, in the historic Haymarket District — a revitalized warehouse area known for its local restaurants, shops and vibrant nightlife.

Mark your calendar and make plans to attend. You may want to arrive Tuesday, Nov. 4, to allow for an early start and to take time to enjoy the downtown area or connect with fellow attendees.

SMA is currently finalizing the program agenda, which will include a tour of the newly completed National Council on Weights and Measures (NCWM) lab facility, led by Don Onwiler.



As always, the meetings will cover a wide range of topics, including VCAP, weighing, global issues and more. Those in attendance can expect lively discussions on many issues impacting the weighing industry. As details and topics become available, they will be posted at [www.scalemanufacturers.org](http://www.scalemanufacturers.org).

Keep checking the website for the full meeting agenda and hotel booking instructions. If you have questions, contact Todd Manifold at [todd.manifold@outlook.com](mailto:todd.manifold@outlook.com).

### International Society of Weighing & Measurement

#### 2026 ISWM Annual Conference Set for Sacramento

The 2026 ISWM Annual Conference will take place March 10–12 in Sacramento, California. Planning for the event is underway. Those interested in speaking are encouraged to contact Ann@iswm.org with a proposed topic and brief bio.

ISWM is also booking event space in Arkansas for the 2027 conference, continuing its tradition of rotating locations across the country.

#### Central Northwest Great Lakes Division Meeting

The Central Northwest Great Lakes Division meeting will be held **August 7–8** in Bloomington, Minnesota, at the Embassy Suites, 7901 34th Ave. South. The sign-up form is available at [iswm.org](http://iswm.org).

#### AI in Our Industry

An AI Committee is being organized by Jeremy Lawrence, who has agreed to serve as chair. He welcomes anyone interested to join the committee.

### Join the Advisory Team for the New AI Service Tool

A new AI-powered service tool is in development to help technicians diagnose and repair scale systems. Built using manufacturer manuals, printed literature and industry publications, the tool will provide quick, intelligent field support.

It will also feature real-world repair videos submitted by scale dealers, creating a community-driven knowledge base backed by ISWM. The tool aims to streamline service operations, reduce support costs, and create new sales opportunities, while offering original equipment manufacturers insight into field performance and service issues.

ISWM is forming an advisory committee to guide the tool's development and support collaboration with manufacturers and regulatory agencies. Committee members will help ensure the tool meets industry needs and will receive early access.

### Dissolution of Two Divisions

The Analytical & Precision Balance Division and the Manufacturing Division are being dissolved. Going forward, members will participate in divisions based on geographical regions. Funds from the dissolved divisions will be used to support ISWM special events and activities.

### National Council on Weights & Measures

#### NCWM to Hold 110th Annual Meeting in Reno

The National Council on Weights and Measures will host its 110th Annual Meeting **July 13–17, 2025**, at the Silver Legacy Resort Casino in downtown Reno.

The 42-story hotel, the tallest building in the city, offers more than 1,700 rooms and has been featured in films such as Kingpin (1996) and Waking Up in Reno (2002).

**Note:** Due to the timing of our printing and mailing schedule, some readers may receive this after the event has begun or concluded. However, if you are in or near the Reno area, there may still be opportunities to attend part of the NCWM Annual Meeting or connect with attendees. We encourage you to reach out directly to the event organizers for the most current information, please contact [elisa.stritt@ncwm.com](mailto:elisa.stritt@ncwm.com).

### DID YOU KNOW?

#### The Catalog Wait Game

Before Amazon, kids in the '80s and '90s ordered from catalogs—and then waited six to eight weeks for delivery. No updates, no tracking—just a lot of anxious staring at the mailbox.





# Weighing Corporate Social Responsibility

If your company has ever teamed up with the local chamber of commerce to teach entrepreneurs the finer points of calibrating scale equipment, donated a floor scale to a veterinary clinic, or welcomed a busload of curious schoolchildren for a behind-the-scenes tour – then congratulations. Whether you knew it or not, you



were already participating in something called Corporate Social Responsibility. Sometimes, it takes the form of quiet generosity. Other times, it might draw a crowd:

Imagine a town launching a community-wide fitness challenge by weighing employees from the Chamber of Commerce on a portable scale – an event colorful enough to catch the attention of the local news. With cameras rolling and neighbors cheering, participants could line up for before-and-after weigh-ins, turning an industrial tool into the symbolic centerpiece of a community's push for better health.

The company behind this publicity promoted good will, and highlighted their product. While people lost weight, the company gained customers.

### The Concept and Promotion of CSR

CSR is not an organization – it's a concept. It's like the rule of reciprocity (or

karma, if you prefer): What you give, you often get back. Maybe not always in money or assets, but in the trust, respect and loyalty of your customers, employees and community. It's not a legal requirement, but a principle worth following – for the good of your company and your neighbors.

CSR may feel modern, but it's been practiced in some form since ancient times – just without a name.

If we look back to when corporate America really started soaring to "infinity and beyond," we see a handful of men trying to put a name on it through the books and articles they wrote on the subject. The most influential of them being Howard Bowen, a capitalist, who published Social Responsibilities of the Businessman in the 1950s – a groundbreaking book that asked companies to look beyond profits and consider their role in society.

Bowen's ideas have since taken root, blossoming into a vibrant bouquet of corporate goodwill — cultivated by businesses that choose to embrace it. Whether they know it as CSR or not, it's good policy.

### Helping Your Community Helps Your Business

For Melanie Luckey, CSR isn't about job titles – it's about purpose. As a Senior Financial Analyst at Jackson Energy Authority, she's also a founding member of the Tennessee Corporate Social Purpose Network, a statewide initiative started under Governor Bill Lee, whose administration has a long history of promoting volunteerism.

Her first exposure to CSR came early in her career, when the bank she worked for appointed her as the officer responsible for the Community Reinvestment Act. That experience gave her a front-row seat to how businesses can invest in underserved communities.

She recalls one moment that became her epiphany: "We awarded a grant to a women's shelter. During the announcement event, women shared how their lives had been turned around by the program. That's when it clicked for me –

this wasn't just about money. It was about the human experience, about real people."

Today, through Tennessee's Corporate Social Purpose Network, Luckey works alongside leaders from companies like Dollar General, Bridgestone, and BlueCross BlueShield to bring CSR to the forefront.

"We're creating space for businesses of all sizes to connect, learn from each other, and build something that lasts," she said. "There are only a handful of states with something like this. It's exciting and it's needed."

### Every Business Could Use Some CSR

You don't have to spend huge amounts of money or have full-time teams to develop CSR. In fact, small-town businesses are often better equipped for creative, community-rooted giving. Here's a secret: Time matters more than money – and small gestures can go a long way.

### Building a Program That Fits You

Today, CSR is less about if businesses should get involved in their communities and more about how they do it. The key? Aligning a company's values, people, and resources with causes they truly care about. The most impactful CSR efforts aren't just good for the community – they energize the employees and make a company proud of the work they do beyond the balance sheet.

Luckey encourages businesses to start with a few clear areas of focus – or "lanes." These are the causes your company and your people care about most, such as:

- Education
- Hunger
- The environment
- Animal welfare

"Ask your employees what matters to them," she said. "When people care, they'll show up. You'll see it in volunteer hours, local events and even the conversations around the break room."

The success rate for a CSR program is better if you start small with a designated point person, who is passionate about the idea. They can gather ideas,

coordinate simple efforts, and keep things moving – putting ideas up for a vote. Here are a few ways to build community impact using what you already have:

- Donate smart: Retiring a bench scale or updating tools? Give them to trade schools, clinics or local nonprofits.
- Volunteer: Pay employees to volunteer at the rescue mission or with programs for children with special needs.
- Support local events: Offer scale services for school projects, ag fairs or 4-H competitions.
- Share your skills: Provide free scale calibration or maintenance to non-profits like food banks or shelters.
- Mentor a student: Invite a high school student to shadow you for a day – it's a simple way to support career exploration and inspire the next generation.

### CSR That Pays Off

While CSR doesn't show up directly on your P&L, the returns are real: stronger community ties, a better reputation and a more loyal team. And yes – there can even be financial benefits.

Though the IRS doesn't offer a tax break just for having a CSR program, companies can often deduct charitable donations, equipment gifts, or wages paid to employees while they volunteer.

Put simply, CSR is one of the few things that can build community, boost morale, and support your bottom line – all at once.

### About the Contributor



Melanie Luckey is a financial analyst at Jackson Energy Authority and a founding member of Tennessee's Corporate Social Purpose Network. With a background in banking and deep roots in community service, she's passionate about helping businesses – big and small – find meaningful ways to give back. She lives in a town just outside of Jackson called Milan, Tennessee, with her husband and two children.

## JULY 4, MEMORIES

### Run for Your Life



Just like there are favorite fireworks shows across the country on the Fourth of July, we've found that people also have their favorite stories to tell about the holiday.

Many are funny—some aren't exactly fit for public sharing—and the best ones are only funny because no one got seriously hurt.

Bill Ramey, Coti Global's senior sales manager, tells one of those stories. He and his friend Fez (yes, that name tells you something) each had purchased a launching box of 30 mortar fireworks. They set up on opposite sides of the yard, where the fireworks show would be. Since they couldn't see each other in the dark, they agreed on a countdown to synchronize the launch—60 fireworks at once.

Bill yelled: "Three, two, one..." and lit the fuse. What he didn't know was that before the countdown, Fez had apparently said, "Hold my beer," and set his launching box on top of a cinder block. Bill laughed, "That phrase 'Hold my beer' started in Alabama—not Texas."

Wherever it started, Fez should have held on to his own beer—and let someone else prep the launch. Three, two, one... Fez lit his fuse. That's when his box tipped—aiming directly at a crowd of 50: kids, parents, friends, all gathered for what was supposed to be a safe backyard celebra-



tion, but fate had other plans.

"I heard several people yell 'RUN!' and then fireworks started flying overhead," Bill said. "I hit the dirt. There was nothing else I could do. Kids were crying, adults were diving for cover, lawn chairs overturned—it was chaos. Full-on scramble mode."

Needless to say, they never had a Fourth of July fireworks show at that house again. "And Fez is no longer allowed to light the fireworks," Bill laughed.

### Curb Encounters of the 4th Kind

It was just after midnight on a Fourth of July weekend in Miami, when two guys decided to rent scooters and cruise across the longest drawbridge connecting Miami Beach to the mainland.



Our very own Trent Beasley and his friend set off without incident—until the ride back, when the bridge was raised. So with time to kill, Trent started curb-jumping—swooping into driveways, jumping back into the street like a real-life video game. His Mario Brother friend rode behind, filming the whole thing.

Then came the final jump—Trent landed perfectly in a parallel parking space. Unfortunately, it had a vertical curb.

"I managed to pull a wheelie to get the front tire over, but the back tire popped, and the rim bent," Trent said. His friend locked up his front brakes and wiped out. It was a long two-mile trip back—and his friend's next ride was through the airport in a wheelchair.





# GETTING TO KNOW RICHARD VARNER

## A CLASSIC ROCK SOUL & LEAD SINGER ON THE WAREHOUSE STAGE

If you had walked into last year's Halloween party at Coti Global Sensors, one costume would have made you do a double take. Amid the sea of elaborate colors and designs, someone stood proudly in the center of the room wearing a hospital gown – open in the back, fake butt and all, legs fully exposed. The laughter was contagious. That someone? Richard Varner.

Richard is someone who loves to get a laugh, doesn't mind being the center of attention for a joke, and doesn't take himself too seriously. That kind of humor often goes hand in hand with warmth and emotional intelligence – and it's part of how he makes others feel instantly at ease.

Born and raised in Huntsville, Alabama, Richard's career in logistics took him across Georgia and Tennessee before bringing him back home. After his father passed away, he returned to Alabama to be closer to his brother, sister and long-time friends.

Over the years, Richard's career involved moving the world with forklifts, lift trucks, and conveyors throughout shipping and receiving departments. So when he spotted a Coti Global Sensors' job listing in 2020 for a shipping and receiving clerk, it felt like a natural fit – and one he's never regretted.

There are those who spend years searching for the right place to live and work, and those who are dialed into their niche – like finding a favorite song on the radio. If you ask Richard, he didn't just find a good place to work – he found the best one. "I still feel like the luckiest man in Huntsville," he says.

When asked about his decision to join Coti Global Sensors, Richard said, "From

the minute you walk in the door, they treat you just like family. Add to that the fact that they take care of us very well, and you have a great company." It wasn't long before he worked his way up to warehouse supervisor, a role that fits his personality well.

Richard is the kind of guy you'd trust to manage a high-value shipment – or host the neighborhood barbecue. He can lead a warehouse team with confidence and still talk about classic rock for hours. There's a relaxed, grounded energy to him.

Coti Global President Ashley Thomas puts it best: "Richard is an adventure-seeker and music lover. He's often heard before he's seen because he's always singing wherever he goes. He's an absolute delight in our offices." She went on to say that Richard will be retiring at the end of June, and "we'll miss him greatly."

The man with a song shares that he loves all kinds of music, but says if you were riding in his truck, "you'd be listening to classic rock." Recently, he took a friend to see Alice Cooper live – a high-throttle experience for the young at heart. But can he dance?

According to coworker Teesha Colboch, "I call him Shuffle-uffagus because he scoots his feet when he's walking. Super chill and laid-back. Never angry. Never fussing with anyone. Super levelheaded. All-around great dude." She added, "Yes,



he loves music and Alabama football – Roll Tide forever!"

That go-with-the-flow vibe runs through every part of his life – from movies to weekend hikes. "Vicki and I are always on the lookout for cool new trails," he says of his hiking companion. "We're even planning an extended trip to the Virgin Islands to island-hop and explore as much as we can."

But what Richard really looks forward to, when he's not on an adventure, is more time with his family. "I'm proud as can be of my three grandkids from my daughter – and proud of my son, too, though he hasn't started a family yet."

Whether he's humming a tune on a trail or playing with his grandkids, Richard brings the same laid-back joy to everything he does – and to everyone lucky enough to work alongside him.

