



For Immediate Release  
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## **Registration Deadline Announced for Fuel Dealers Offering Pre-Paid Home Heating Contracts**

### *New Online Registration Process Helps Fuel Dealers*

GARDINER – Commissioner Anne L. Head at Maine’s Department of Professional and Financial Regulation highlighted the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline for fuel dealers to register with the state if they intend to offer pre-paid home heating contracts for the next fuel season.

She also announced that a new online process will assist both fuel dealers and the public. The registration form and general information can be obtained from the Department’s website ([www.maine.gov/pfr](http://www.maine.gov/pfr)), or directly at [www.maine.gov/pfr/hho.html](http://www.maine.gov/pfr/hho.html).

Intended to provide greater protections to consumers who use pre-paid home heating contracts, LD 1895, *An Act To Protect Consumers by Strengthening the Laws Governing Prepaid Home Heating Oil Contracts*, became law in 2012.

The law responded to numerous examples of dealers taking money from Maine consumers, but then failing to supply the fuel, leaving the consumers without oil and unable to recover their money.

“Maine’s fuel dealers are almost always reputable and dependable,” Commissioner Head said. “However, to discourage cases in which dealers don’t meet their obligation, Maine law has been changed to require greater accountability. The Department is working cooperatively with dealers as we seek to provide more protection for consumers.”

The law requires a fuel dealer who offers prepaid contracts for home heating oil, kerosene or liquefied petroleum gas to Maine residents to register the dealer’s intent to offer such contracts with the Department by June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year. It also requires these dealers to file a report by October 31<sup>st</sup> each year to indicate the manner of compliance.

Additionally, the law requires that the annual report include a notice that a false statement is punishable as a Class D crime. The law provides that a violation of the requirements of Title 10, Section 1110 is a violation of the Maine Unfair Trade Practices Act.

Consumers wishing to check whether a fuel company registers by the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline, or fuel dealers seeking additional information, can call the Department at (207) 624-8511.

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