The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) is set to announce a two-year delay to its Entry Level Driver Training (ELDT) Rule scheduled to go into effect February 7, 2020. The ELDT rule is important to heating oil dealers because it requires rigorous new training for both new CDL license applicants and current CDL holders seeking a license upgrade.

The new requirements include expanded written test materials and practical skills testing in real life situations on public highways. Critics of ELDT say it will increase the shortage of CDL drivers due to the degree of difficulty of the new training requirements and the expense of mandatory enrollment with a FMCSA certified training provider.

The delay is due to the failure of state driver licensing authorities to align their electronic database with the new FMCSAs' nationwide online repository for unified CDL data collection. Initially, the FMCSA planned to allow the two-year compliance delay to apply only to state CDL licensing agencies. Medical review professionals, certified training vendors, and drivers would have still been required to comply by the February 7, 2020 deadline.

However, the lack of certified trainers and other system glitches convinced the agency that a two-year across-the-board delay would be required. The delay is good news for heating oil dealers because the system failures would have added additional delay for new applicants and current CDL drivers seeking an upgrade.

The ELDT rule establishes new minimum training standards for individuals applying for:

- Class A or Class B commercial driver's license (CDL) for the first time;
- Upgrade of current CDL (e.g., a Class B CDL holder seeking a Class A CDL);
- Hazardous materials (H) endorsement on their CDL for the first time.

The new deadline is likely to be February 7, 2022. However, specific details, other than the length of delay, will not be known until the FMCSA publishes a formal notice in the Federal Register. The final rule was mandated by Congress under the "Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act" (MAP-21).