The Virgin Islands Consortium

Six St. Croix Gas Stations Cleared for Price Increases; DLCA Now Demanding Delivery and Inventory Proof

DLCA now requires proof of delivery and inventory data before fuel price increases will be considered, saying six St. Croix gas stations have complied, while nine on St. Croix and five St. Thomas marinas are already facing enforcement.

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The V.I. Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs has moved to tighten oversight of fuel price increases across the territory, announcing that retailers must now provide proof of delivery and inventory data before any request to raise prices will even be considered.

The move comes as fuel market volatility continues to fuel concern in the Virgin Islands. The new requirements took effect immediately, according to Commissioner Nathalie Hodge, and are intended to ensure that any increase at the pump reflects actual cost changes rather than timing, speculation, or older, lower-cost inventory still in storage.

Under the updated process, fuel retailers are now required to provide delivery records and inventory information in addition to the paperwork already required when seeking approval for a price increase. DLCA said retailers have already been required to submit a completed Notice to Change Price of Fuel form along with a copy of the most recent supplier invoice. Going forward, they must also provide Veeder-Root tank reports or similar fuel system data.

The department said those records will allow it to verify when fuel was delivered, how much inventory is on hand, and whether a requested increase is actually tied to newly delivered fuel purchased at a higher price. DLCA said the added documentation is being required under the Virgin Islands Price Control Act and the department's existing order governing fuel price increases.

Hodge said the goal is to strengthen fairness and transparency in the fuel market.

“The DLCA is closely monitoring fuel pricing and supply activity across the Territory. These enhanced requirements allow us to confirm when fuel is delivered, how much is available, and whether price increases are truly tied to higher costs. Consumers should feel confident that fuel prices reflect real market conditions and not timing or speculation.”

DLCA noted that retailers still may not raise fuel prices without first receiving written authorization from the department. It also stressed that submitting a request does not amount to approval. Any increase put in place without authorization, or without the proper supporting records, will be treated as unauthorized and will trigger enforcement action.

The department said six gas retailers on St. Croix have so far been approved for fuel price increases after meeting the documentation requirements in full. At the time the release was issued, DLCA said no fuel retailers in the St. Thomas-St. John district had submitted requests for price increases.

At the same time, the department said compliance problems remain elsewhere in the territory. DLCA reported that, as of the release's issuance, it had identified nine gas stations on St. Croix and five marinas on St. Thomas that were out of compliance. According to the department, enforcement actions are already underway and daily penalties are being assessed against those businesses.

Hodge warned that violations can carry escalating consequences. “Any violation of the Department's Order may result in administrative penalties of up to $200 per violation, per day, as each day a violation continues shall constitute a separate offense pursuant to the Virgin Islands Price Control Act.”

DLCA said it will continue monitoring fuel pricing across the territory, including supplier rack rates and retail pricing trends. The department also encouraged retailers to comply with the new documentation standards to avoid delays and possible enforcement.