



News Release

Attorney General Robert E. Cooper, Jr.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 29, 2010

#10-16

CONTACT: Sharon Curtis-Flair (AG)

(615) 741-5860

Chris Garrett (TDCI)

(615) 741-8589

ATTORNEY GENERAL RESOLVES GASOLINE PRICING ENFORCEMENT ACTION WITH MAJOR KNOXVILLE-AREA RETAILER

Agreement Totals \$57,000; Consumer Claim Refunds Deadline June 28

Attorney General Bob Cooper has filed an agreement with Weigel Stores, Inc., a gasoline retailer with a major presence in Knoxville, on behalf of the Commerce and Insurance Department's Division of Consumer Affairs. The agreement now pending before a Knox County Chancellor totals \$57,000 and will allow consumers to claim refunds from the Division of Consumer Affairs. Consumers should request refunds by June 28.

Weigel's asserts that it has entered the agreement to avoid the expense of litigation and continues to deny any wrongdoing.

The agreement resolves the State's allegations that Weigel's unlawfully raised prices for regular, mid-grade, and/or premium unleaded gasoline at 33 locations from Sept. 12 until Sept. 18, 2008. The State alleged that the defendant unlawfully raised prices to \$3.94-\$5.00 for regular unleaded, to \$3.91-\$5.10 for mid-grade unleaded, and to \$4.13-\$5.23 for premium unleaded gasoline.

The agreement amounts to the largest gasoline pricing enforcement action against a single retailer in the State's history. If signed by a judge, the settlement concludes the State's Hurricane Ike gasoline pricing enforcement sweep. Last April, the Attorney General resolved similar allegations with 16 companies and individuals, involving 27 retail stations in Tennessee. During this time period, Knoxville had some of the highest gasoline prices in the country.

"We want to make sure that consumers and small businesses are getting a fair price at the pump," Attorney General Bob Cooper said.

"We encourage anyone who may have experienced a problem with a gasoline retailer to contact our office to file a complaint," said Mary Clement, director of the Division of Consumer Affairs.

Anyone who purchased gasoline from a Weigel's retail store covered by the First Amended Complaint during the dates and times referenced in the First Amended Complaint is eligible to receive restitution. Consumers are asked to fill in as much information as possible on the State's online price gouging form by June 28. Click [HERE](#) to access the online form. Click [HERE](#) for the list of stores contained in the State's First Amended Complaint. You may be asked for additional verifying information depending on the number of claims submitted. Consumers may also call the Division of Consumer Affairs at 1-800-342-8385 for more information.

For complete details regarding the State's action visit the Attorney General's website at www.tn.gov/attorneygeneral.

Consumers who believe they may have been charged unreasonably for an essential good, commodity or service in direct response to a crime, act of terrorism, war, or natural disaster, should complete the online complaint form at <http://www.tn.gov/consumer/PriceGougeCmplnt.shtml> or call 1-800-342-8385 to report price gouging activities. Consumers are asked to provide as many details as possible including the station name, location of the station, the price of the gas, and grade of the gas.