

§616-A. Penalties

1. Informal hearing. When the staff of the board proposes that the board take action on a possible violation, the board shall notify the alleged violator before discussing the alleged violation. The alleged violator may choose to address the board and may also choose to be represented by legal counsel. This requirement does not constitute and is not subject to the same procedures as an adjudicatory hearing under the Maine Administrative Procedure Act.

[PL 2005, c. 620, §16 (AMD).]

2. Civil violations. The following violations are civil violations.

A. A person may not violate this subchapter or a rule adopted pursuant to this subchapter or Title 22, chapter 258-A or a rule adopted pursuant to Title 22, chapter 258-A. This paragraph does not apply to a private applicator as defined in Title 22, section 1471-C, subsection 22 or a private applicator of general use pesticides as defined in Title 22, section 1471-C, subsection 22-A. Except as provided in paragraph B, the following penalties apply to violations of this paragraph.

(1) A person who violates this paragraph commits a civil violation for which a fine may be adjudged as follows.

(a) A fine of not more than \$10,000 may be adjudged except as provided in division (b).

(b) A fine of not more than \$50,000 may be adjudged for an unauthorized pesticide application in a case in which the preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that the person who violated this paragraph benefited substantially from the violation as determined by the board by routine technical rule as described in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A. Clear and convincing evidence that only one person benefited substantially from an unauthorized pesticide application constitutes prima facie evidence that the person is responsible for the unauthorized pesticide application.

(2) A person who violates this paragraph and is subject to a fine under subparagraph (1), division (a) after having previously violated this paragraph and having been subject to a fine under subparagraph (1), division (a) within the previous 4-year period commits a civil violation for which a fine of not more than \$75,000 may be adjudged. A person who violates this paragraph and is subject to a fine under subparagraph (1), division (b) after having previously violated this paragraph and having been subject to a fine under subparagraph (1), division (b) within the previous 4-year period commits a civil violation for which a fine of not more than \$150,000 may be adjudged. [PL 2025, c. 292, §1 (AMD).]

B. A private applicator, as defined in Title 22, section 1471-C, subsection 22, and a private applicator of general use pesticides, as defined in Title 22, section 1471-C, subsection 22-A, may not violate this subchapter or a rule adopted pursuant to this subchapter or Title 22, chapter 258-A or a rule adopted pursuant to Title 22, chapter 258-A or a rule regarding records maintained pursuant to section 606, subsection 2, paragraph G. The following penalties apply to violations of this paragraph.

(1) A person who violates this paragraph commits a civil violation for which a fine of not more than \$1,000 may be adjudged.

(2) A person who violates this paragraph after having previously violated this paragraph within the previous 4-year period commits a civil violation for which a fine of not more than \$2,000 may be adjudged. [PL 2025, c. 292, §2 (AMD).]

[PL 2025, c. 292, §§1, 2 (AMD).]

2-A. Criminal violation. A person may not intentionally or knowingly violate this subchapter or Title 22, chapter 258-A, a rule adopted under this subchapter or Title 22, chapter 258-A or a restriction of a registration issued pursuant to this subchapter. A person who violates this subsection commits a

Class E crime. Notwithstanding Title 17-A, section 1604, subsection 1 and sections 1704 and 1705, the court may impose a sentencing alternative of a fine of not more than \$7,500 or a term of imprisonment of not more than 30 days, or both, for each violation. Prosecution under this subsection is by summons and not by warrant. A prosecution under this subsection is separate from an action brought pursuant to subsection 2.

[PL 2019, c. 113, Pt. C, §1 (AMD).]

3. Continuation. Each day that the violation continues is considered a separate offense.
[PL 1989, c. 841, §3 (NEW).]

4. Exceptions.

[PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. B, §8 (RP); PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. X, §2 (AFF).]

5. Criminal violations.

[PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. B, §8 (RP); PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. X, §2 (AFF).]

6. Other relief. Notwithstanding Title 22, section 1471-D, subsections 6 to 8 and in addition to other sanctions provided under this section, the court may order that a violator obtain recertification credits through board-approved meetings or courses as a condition of retaining, maintaining or renewing a certification or license required under Title 22, chapter 258-A.

[PL 1989, c. 841, §3 (NEW).]

7. Considerations. In setting a penalty under this section, the court shall consider, without limitation:

- A. Prior violations by the same party; [PL 1989, c. 841, §3 (NEW).]
- B. The degree of harm to the public and the environment; [PL 1989, c. 841, §3 (NEW).]
- C. The degree of environmental damage that has not been abated or corrected; [PL 1989, c. 841, §3 (NEW).]
- D. The extent to which the violation continued following the board's notice to the violator; [PL 1989, c. 841, §3 (NEW).]
- E. The importance of deterring the same person or others from future violations; and [PL 1989, c. 841, §3 (NEW).]
- F. The cause and circumstances of the violation, including:
 - (1) The foreseeability of the violation;
 - (2) The standard of care exercised by the violator; and
 - (3) Whether or not the violator reported the incident to the board. [PL 1989, c. 841, §3 (NEW).]

[PL 1989, c. 841, §3 (NEW).]

8. Injunction. The board may bring an action to enjoin the violation or threatened violation of any provision of this subchapter or any rule made pursuant to this subchapter in a court of competent jurisdiction of the district in which the violation occurs or is about to occur.

[PL 1989, c. 841, §3 (NEW).]

9. No damages from administrative action if probable cause exists. A court may not allow the recovery of damages from administrative action taken, or for a stop sale, use or removal order, if the court finds that there was probable cause for the administrative action.

[PL 1989, c. 841, §3 (NEW).]

10. Sunset.

[PL 1991, c. 829, §1 (RP).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1989, c. 841, §3 (NEW). PL 1991, c. 829, §1 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 452, §§B6-8 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 452, §X2 (AFF). PL 2005, c. 620, §16 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 510, §1 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 113, Pt. C, §1 (AMD). PL 2025, c. 292, §§1, 2 (AMD).

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