



PAUL R. LEPAGE
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY
MAINE FOREST SERVICE
22 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

WALTER E. WHITCOMB
COMMISSIONER

August 22, 2017

Dear Municipal Official,


The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry has been receiving inquiries regarding the use of private online burn permit systems. In early 2017 the department was asked to endorse a private online burn permit system. With the escalating use of these systems and concerns for the safe use of outdoor fires, the Maine Forest Service (MFS) felt that it was prudent to review the statutory implications of private online systems. The finding was that these systems did not provide a valid permit to the end user. The finding compelled the MFS to contact towns advising them to halt the use of private online systems this past June.

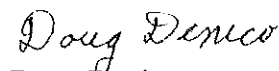
In July the Legislature passed L.D. 1640 which allows the use of private systems if all statutory requirements of issuing burn permits are met by the software. Having no idea of the proliferation or compliance of private online systems resulting from L.D 1640, the MFS will be unable to endorse such systems.

The best and most conservative course for a burn permittee to follow is to use the traditional paper permit system or the MFS online burn permit system.

The MFS is hopeful the Legislature will revisit the online issue next session and consider having one system for the organized towns and address the cost issue which is entirely within the Legislature's jurisdiction.

The MFS has prepared requirements, which are attached for operators of online systems wishing to meet the Legislature's intent.


Walter E. Whitcomb,
Commissioner


Doug Denico,
Director, MFS

DOUG DENICO, DIRECTOR
MAINE FOREST SERVICE
18 ELKINS LANE, HARLOW BUILDING



PHONE: (207) 287-2791 OR 800-367-0223

www.maineforestservice.gov