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# Price Gouging Weekly Round Up

**May 24, 2021**

## Price gouging enforcement and litigation is front and center for company counsel and business managers nationwide. Our weekly round up highlights some of the most relevant news and information to our clients and friends.

### Minnesota Landlord Pays for Violating Eviction Moratorium

On May 19, 2021, the Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison announced a consent judgement, following a suit against a landlord who had evicted tenants during the state's eviction moratorium. The Governor's Executive Order 20-79 provided an exception to the general eviction prohibition, namely landlords who needed a property for themselves or a family member could evict tenants. The Attorney General alleged that the landlord in this case informed her tenants that she needed to move into the property herself, when in reality she had already retained a realtor to sell the property. The terms of the consent judgement requires the landlord to pay $3,575.86, part of which will be used to reimburse the tenants.

### North Carolina Gas Prices Stop Rising

Last week, gas prices in Charlotte, North Carolina dropped slightly for the first time since prices spiked approximately 15 cents per gallon. In the fallout of the Colonial Pipeline shutdown, North Carolina reported that about 43% of gas stations were without fuel as of May 18, 2021. Gas remains close to the $3.00 mark. The Colonial Pipeline shutdown was a major disruption to North Carolina as the pipeline delivers 45% of the gasoline supply to the East Coast.

### More Price Gouging Complaints Surge in Virginia and North Carolina

Within one week of the Colonial Pipeline shutdown, over 500 Virginians and over 900 North Carolinians filed complaints of price gouging related to gasoline. Virginia Governor Ralph Northam and North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper both declared states of emergency related to the pipeline shutdown. Virginia's Attorney General announced that his office has sent more than 150 investigative letters to businesses in response to consumer complaints for high prices on gasoline. North Carolina's Attorney General announced his office is reviewing over 900 complaints, but it is unclear at this time how many of these complaints will be pursued further.

## Hawaii's Ongoing Rental Car Shortage

As tourists return to Hawaii, rental cars continue to be hard to come by. Rates have been reported as high as $700 per day. Visitors seeking alternatives to the large rental car companies are using car sharing apps, but the prices there are still hundreds of dollars per day. In response, the state's Office of Consumer Protection is investigating the possibility of price gouging. The office has yet to make a final determination on the issue.

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