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Williamstown woman guilty of stealing \$220,000

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Nancy Poirier, 42, of Williamstown pleaded guilty Monday in U.S. District Court in Rutland to stealing \$220,000 from Trono Fuels. / Free Press file photo

Written by **Mike Donoghue**

while serving as an accounts receivable manager.

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Nancy Poirier, 42, of Williamstown siphoned the money between January 2005 and July 2010, according to the one-count indictment. The plea came Monday in U.S. District Court in Rutland.

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The thefts were made from cash payments by customers for fuel oil and also by altering the company’s accounting records in an attempt to hide the misappropriation, the indictment stated.

Chief U.S. District Judge Christina Reiss released Poirier while a pre-sentencing report is prepared by the U.S. Probation Office. Sentencing is scheduled for Jan. 10 in Rutland.

There has been no public explanation of what became of the money.

Poirier’s plea agreement asks the court to credit her with accepting responsibility for the embezzlement when determining her sentence.

“She may have saved the cost of the trial, but she certainly cost me over \$20,000 to determine the extent of the loss,” Trono Fuels owner Peter Trono told the Burlington Free Press after the hearing.

He said he had to spend the money on unexpected accounting services in an effort to determine how much was stolen.

Trono said he expected the guilty plea, because Poirier confessed when she was first approached.

“She admitted that when we confronted her,” said Trono, who notified Barre police.

Poirier was charged with embezzlement under federal law because Trono Fuels received more than \$10,000 a year between 2005 and 2010 in federal low-income home energy assistance subsidies.

Trono Fuels has been a Burlington-based business since 1946. Trono added his Washington County office by buying Rice Fuels of Barre in 2002. Poirier had worked for Rice and continued with Trono.

Poirier initially denied the felony charge July 7 when she appeared before Magistrate Judge John Conroy in Burlington.

Poirier requested a public defender to represent her because she had only \$506 and a 7-year-old car to her name, she said. It was unclear where the missing money was spent.

Contact Mike Donoghue at 660-1845 or mdonoghue@burlingtonfreepress.com.

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