

For Immediate Release
August 30, 2012

NR 85-12-S
Contact: Jaime Garza
916-327-8988

California Gasoline Demand Rose 3.3 Percent in May, Fuel Tax Data Says Prices Spiked to \$4.35 a Gallon in May

Sacramento – California’s gasoline demand rose 3.3 percent in May as prices hit \$4.35 per gallon, according to fuel tax data released by Michelle Steel, Third District Member of the State Board of Equalization (BOE). Diesel consumption increased 7.1 percent in May. *(See chart for month-over-month monthly gasoline and diesel consumption comparisons.)*

BOE’s fuel tax report showed Californians consumed **1.28 billion gallons** of gasoline in May, a 3.3 percent increase from the 1.24 billion during the same period last year. However, during the first five months of 2012, California gas consumption was changed little from the first five months of 2011 (a 0.1 percent increase) despite a growing population and more people commuting to work. In California, average gasoline prices were up 12 cents to \$4.35 in May, a 2.9 percent increase over last May’s average price according to the [U.S. Energy Information Administration \(EIA\)](#).

California’s **diesel consumption** was 228 million gallons in May, up 15 million gallons or 7.1 percent from a year ago. During the first five months of 2012, diesel consumption squeezed up 1.2 percent, matching the average increase of 2011. California’s average diesel prices were down 5 cents to \$4.32 per gallon in May.

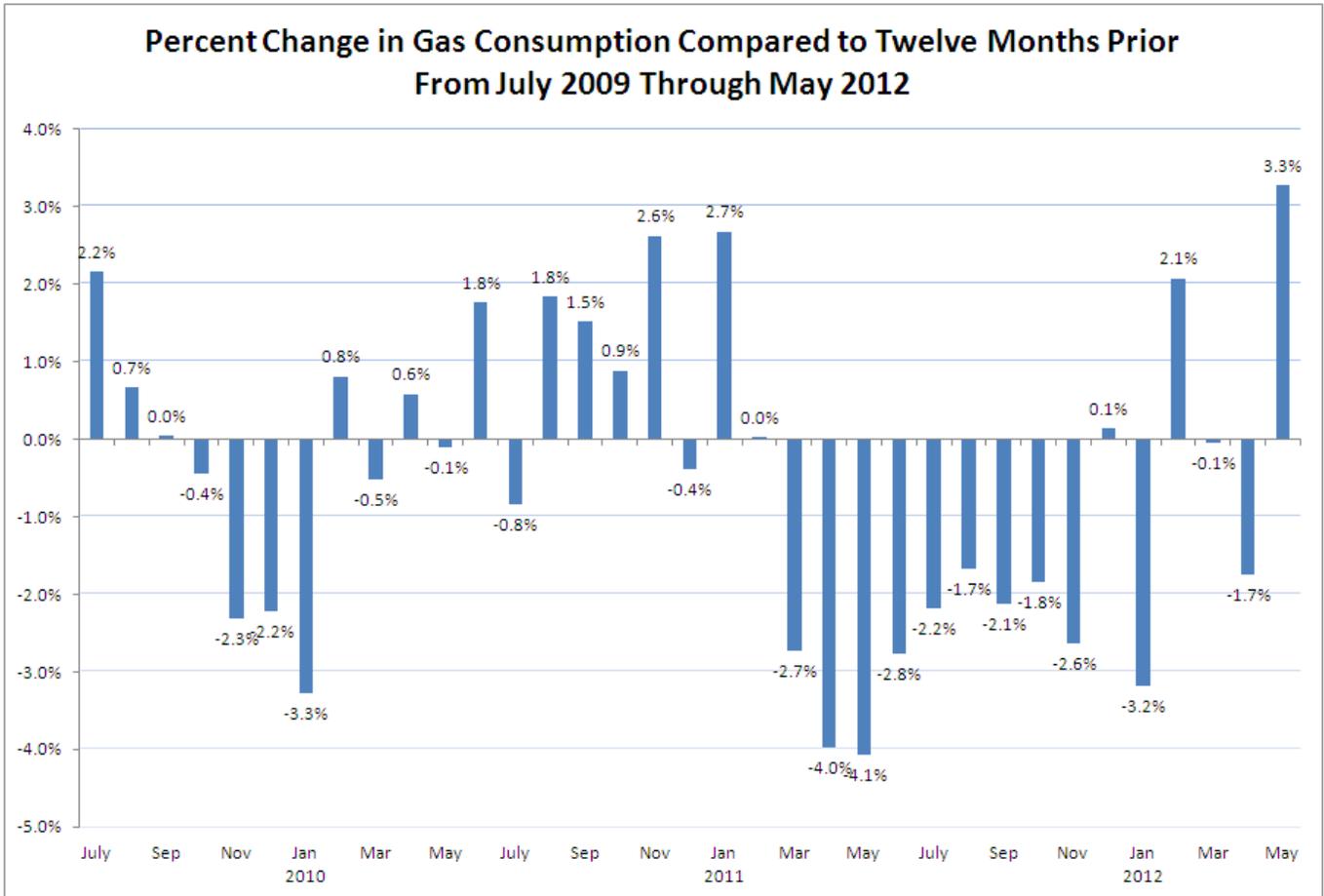
Nationally, the [EIA](#) reports regular gasoline averaged \$3.79 a gallon, down 17 cents from May of last year. The [EIA](#) diesel retail prices reported the national average price of diesel was down 7 cents, to \$3.98 from a year earlier.

The BOE Chief Economist reports in the *Economic Perspective* (August 2012) that despite the economic stresses during the decade between 2000 and 2010, including an 86 percent increase in gasoline prices, U.S. household spending jumped 27 percent. Spending on gasoline increased significantly for all households, a minimum of \$378 for the lowest-earning households, and up to a maximum of \$1,187 for the top-earning households.

California gasoline and diesel fuel figures are net consumption that includes audit assessments, refunds, amended and late tax returns and the State Controller’s Office refunds. The information is based on fuel tax receipts paid by fuel distributors in California. BOE updates the fuel reports at the end of each month.

Connect with Us:

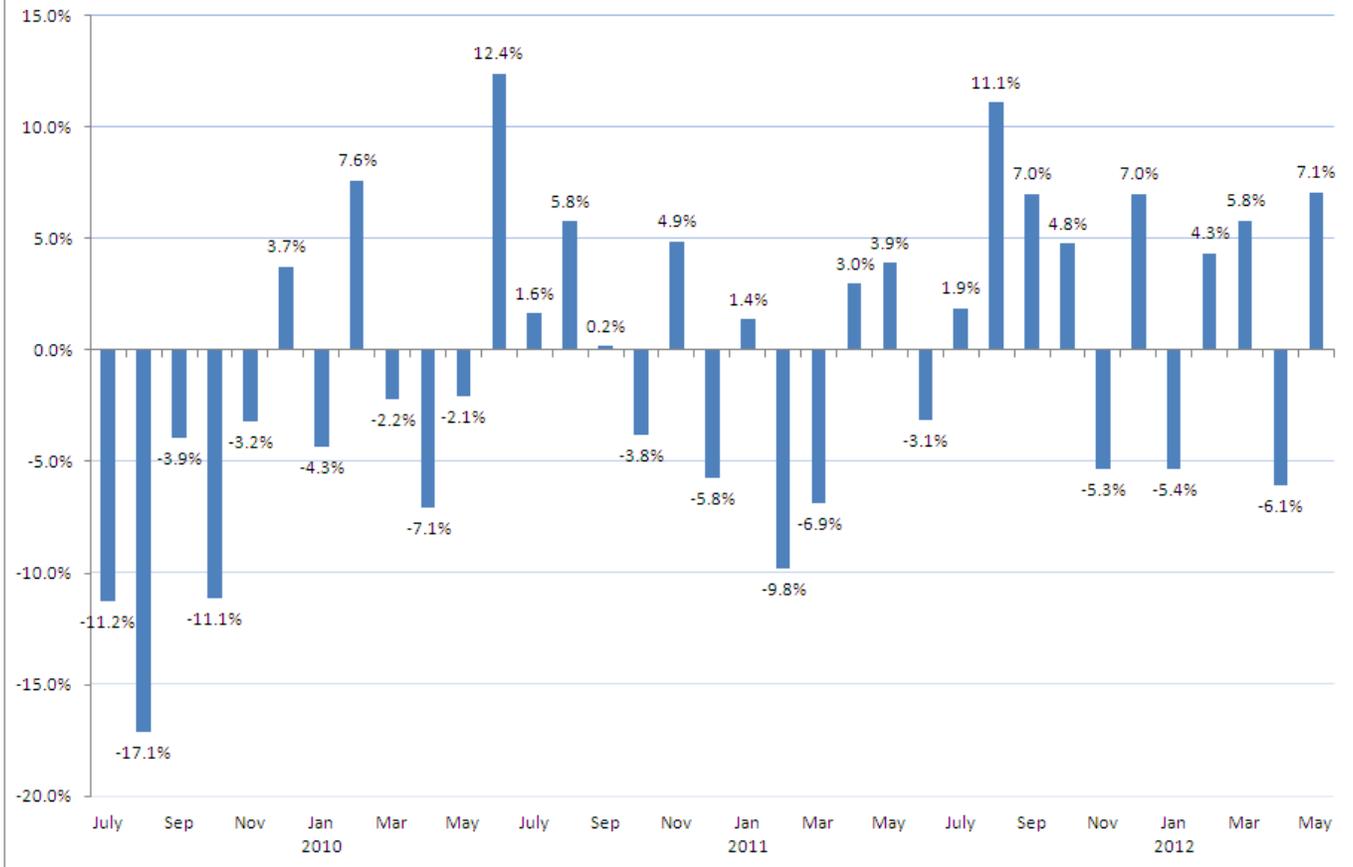




Connect with Us:



Percent Change in Diesel Gallons Compared to Twelve Months Prior From July 2009 Through May 2012



* * * * *

Elected to the Board of Equalization in 2006 and re-elected in 2010, Michelle Steel serves as *Southern California's elected taxpayer advocate*. In December 2007, Steel discovered the Board of Equalization had delayed the return of millions of dollars in security deposits owed to California businesses. Procedures were changed due to Steel's decisive leadership. Following her investigation, the tax agency refunded tax security deposits to over 5,500 small businesses. To date, over \$100 million in security deposits have been returned to taxpayers.

The five-member California State Board of Equalization (BOE) is a publicly elected tax board. The BOE collects more than \$50 billion annually in taxes and fees supporting state and local government services. It hears business tax appeals, acts as the appellate body for franchise and personal income tax appeals, and serves a significant role in the assessment and administration of property taxes. For more information on other taxes and fees in California, visit www.taxes.ca.gov.

###

Connect with Us:

