



State Board of Equalization

# News Release

**Vice Chair Michelle Steel**

**3<sup>rd</sup> District – Rolling Hills Estates**

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Executive Director  
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**For Immediate Release**  
**May 25, 2012**

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## **Gasoline Consumption Increases First Time in a Year as Prices Spike** **Gasoline Consumption Up 2.1%; Prices Jumped 12.6%**

**Sacramento** – For the first time in a year, gasoline consumption rose—2.1 percent—despite a hefty 12.6 percent increase in California gasoline prices, according to a report released today by Michelle Steel, Vice Chair of the California State Board of Equalization (BOE). Gasoline prices jumped 12.6% to an average of \$4.03 a gallon in February 2012, while consumption increased 2.1% compared to a year ago.

In California, diesel fuel prices were up 11.8% to \$4.25 as consumption increased 4.3% in February from a year earlier. Diesel consumption often reflects the pace of economic activity such as imports and exports through California ports, supply and demand conditions in residential and nonresidential construction, and agriculture.

Gasoline and diesel fuel prices in California were higher than the nation as a whole. Nationally, the U.S. [Energy Information Administration](#) (EIA) reports that the average price of a gallon of gasoline was up 11.7% to \$ 3.64 in February from a year ago. The [EIA](#) also reported that the national average price of a gallon of diesel was up 10.3% to \$3.95 in February from a year earlier.

The high price of gasoline was a primary factor in the rise in consumer prices. The [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) reported in February 2012 that its consumer price index rose 2.9% in February 2012 from a year earlier.

Consistent with using more gasoline, the [Federal Highway Administration](#) data show a 1.0% increase in vehicle miles traveled by Californians in February 2012 from a year earlier.

BOE monitors gasoline consumption using tax receipts paid by fuel distributors in California. BOE updates the fuel reports at the end of each month.

Fuel Statistics and Reports [www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/spftrpts.htm](http://www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/spftrpts.htm)

Taxable Gasoline Gallons Report: [www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/reports/MVF\\_10\\_Year\\_Report.pdf](http://www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/reports/MVF_10_Year_Report.pdf)

Taxable Diesel Gallons Report: [www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/reports/Diesel\\_10\\_Year\\_Report.pdf](http://www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/reports/Diesel_10_Year_Report.pdf)

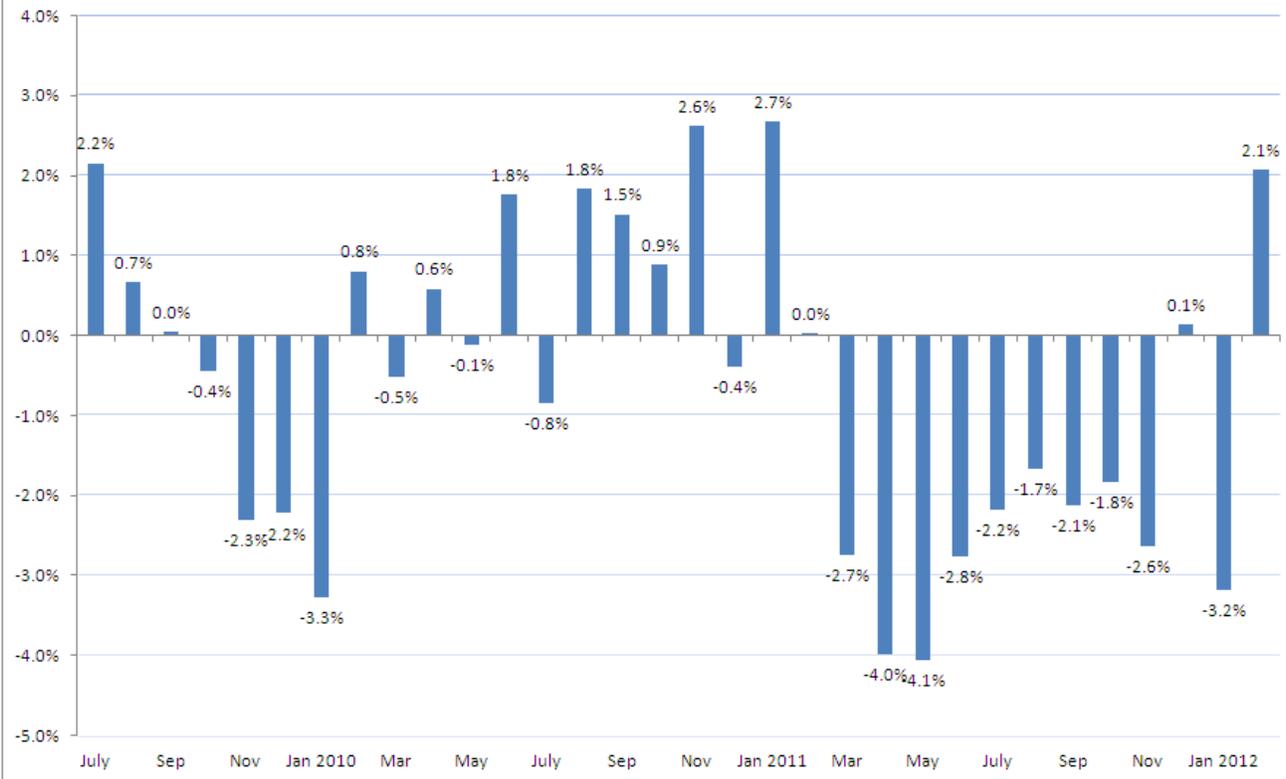
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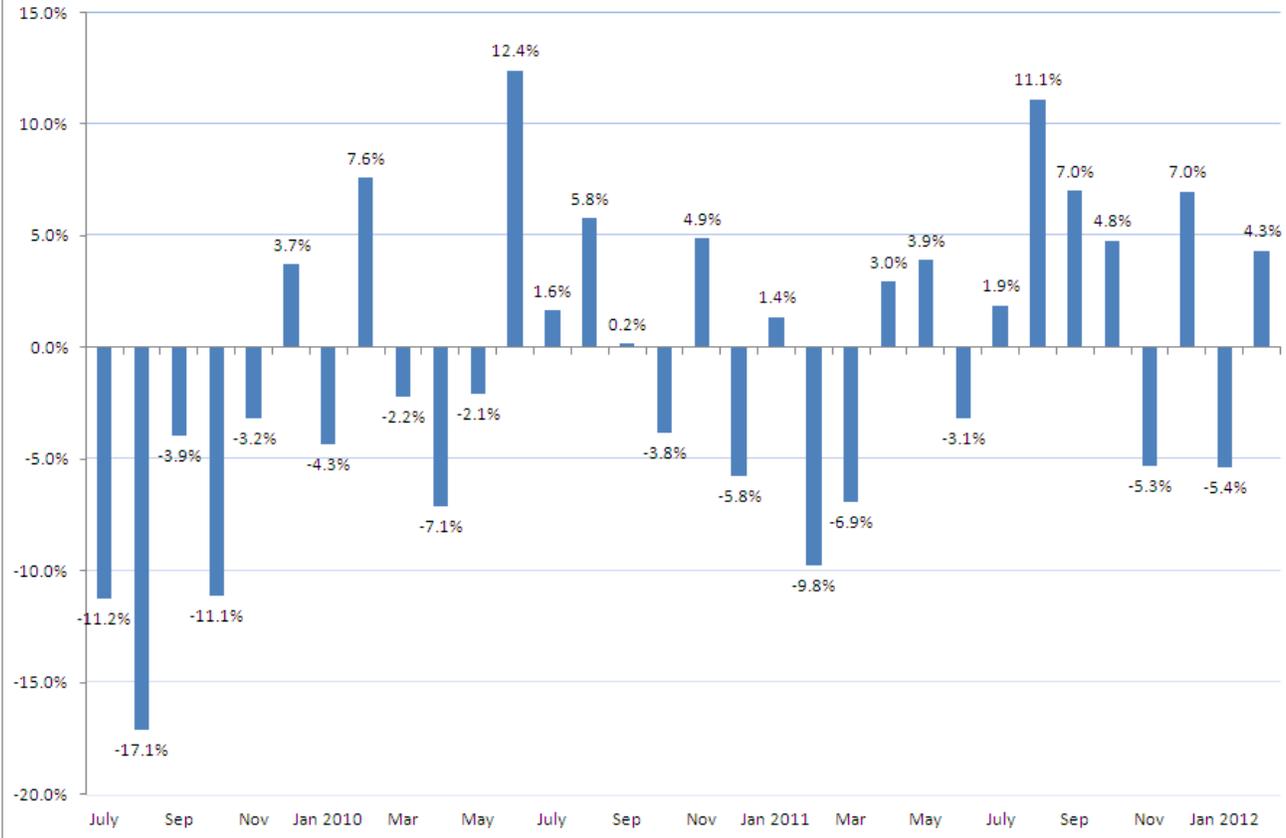
## Percent Change in Gas Consumption Compared to Twelve Months Prior From July 2009 Through February 2012



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



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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](http://www.taxes.ca.gov).

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