



State Board of Equalization

News Release

Vice Chair Michelle Steel

3rd District – Orange County

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Executive Director
www.boe.ca.gov

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California Gasoline: Prices Up, Consumption Down **Prices Reach \$4.29 a Gallon in April, Gasoline Use Drops 1.7%**

Sacramento –California’s average gasoline price reached \$4.29 in April as gasoline consumption in California declined 1.7 percent, according to a report released today by Michelle Steel, Vice Chair of the California State Board of Equalization (BOE). (*See chart for year-over-year monthly gasoline consumption comparisons.*)

In California, average gasoline prices were up 9 cents to \$4.29 in April. Total [gasoline consumption](#) for April was 1.18 billion gallons compared to April of last year, when it was 1.20 billion gallons. Nationally, regular gasoline averaged \$3.96 a gallon, up 11 cents from April of last year according to the U.S. [Energy Information Administration](#) (EIA). The EIA diesel retail prices reported the national average price of diesel was up 5 cents to \$4.12 in April from a year earlier.

High gasoline prices might be causing a shift in driving and auto ownership patterns. Declines in both cars per licensed driver and licensed drivers per driving-age population were cited in a February report, [North America – U.S. Economics – Motor Vehicles, State of the U.S. Motor Vehicle Industry: 2012](#), by Briefing Research, a group based in Chicago and Burlingame. According to the report, “For the past several years, the recession and the economic uncertainty in the immediate aftermath caused motor vehicle sales to fall to their lowest point since data became available in 1976.”

The upcoming BOE [Economic Perspective](#) newsletter (August 2012) reports that spending on gasoline increased greatly for all households, a minimum of \$378 for the lowest-earning, and up to a maximum of \$1,187 for the top-earning households during the 10-year period of 2000 through 2010. These increases are not surprising with an 86 percent increase in gas prices during the same period.

The [Economic Perspective](#) also reports that households are buying cars less frequently today than they were a decade ago, as spending on new and used cars declined for all households from 2000 to 2010. The average age of cars owned by households rose from 8.9 years in 2000 to 10.6 years in 2010. The average age of cars has been rising since the mid-1990s.

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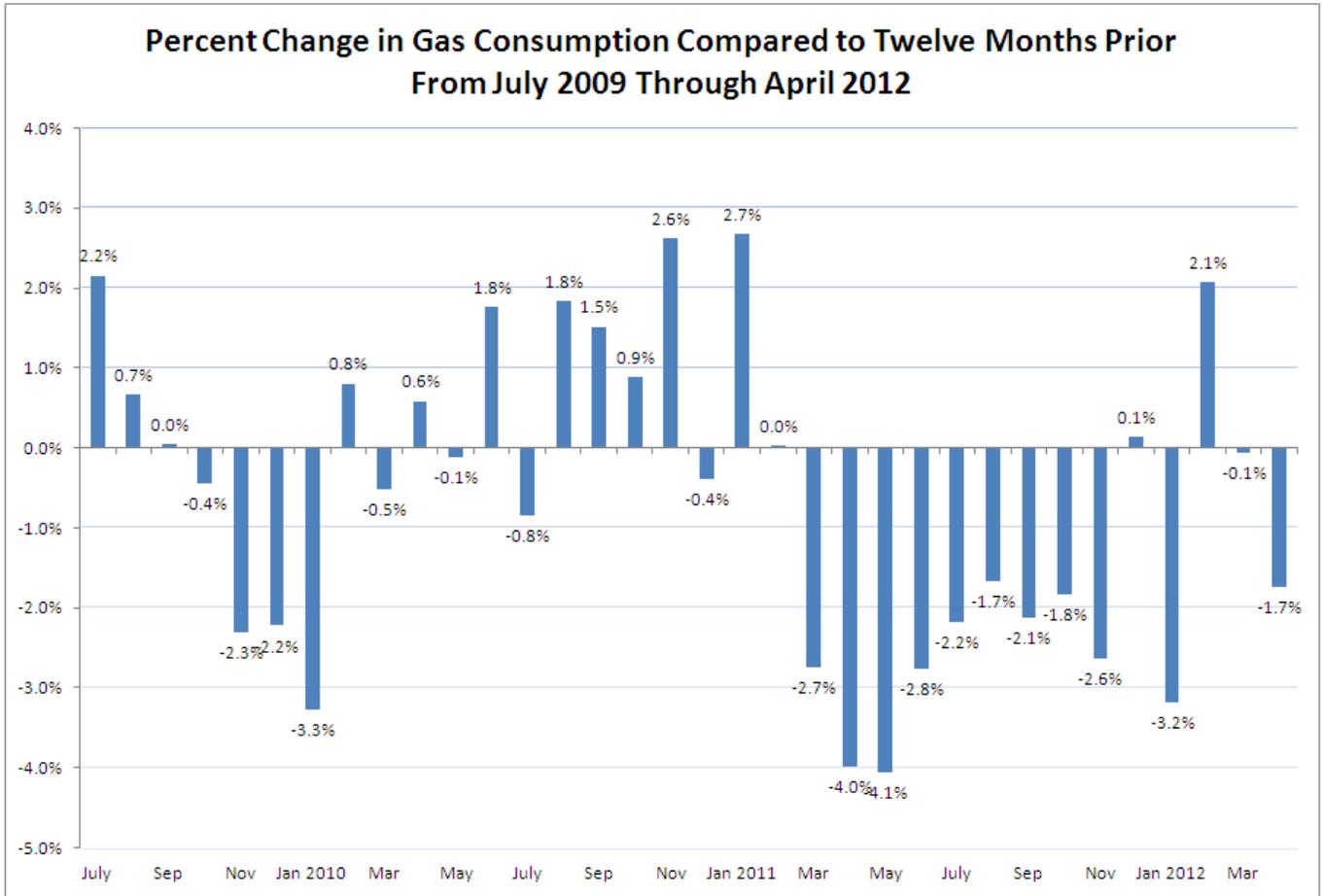


BOE monitors gasoline consumption using tax receipts paid by fuel distributors in California. BOE updates the fuel reports at the end of each month.

California Fuel Statistics and Reports www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/spftrpts.htm

Taxable Gasoline Gallons Report: www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/reports/MVF_10_Year_Report.pdf

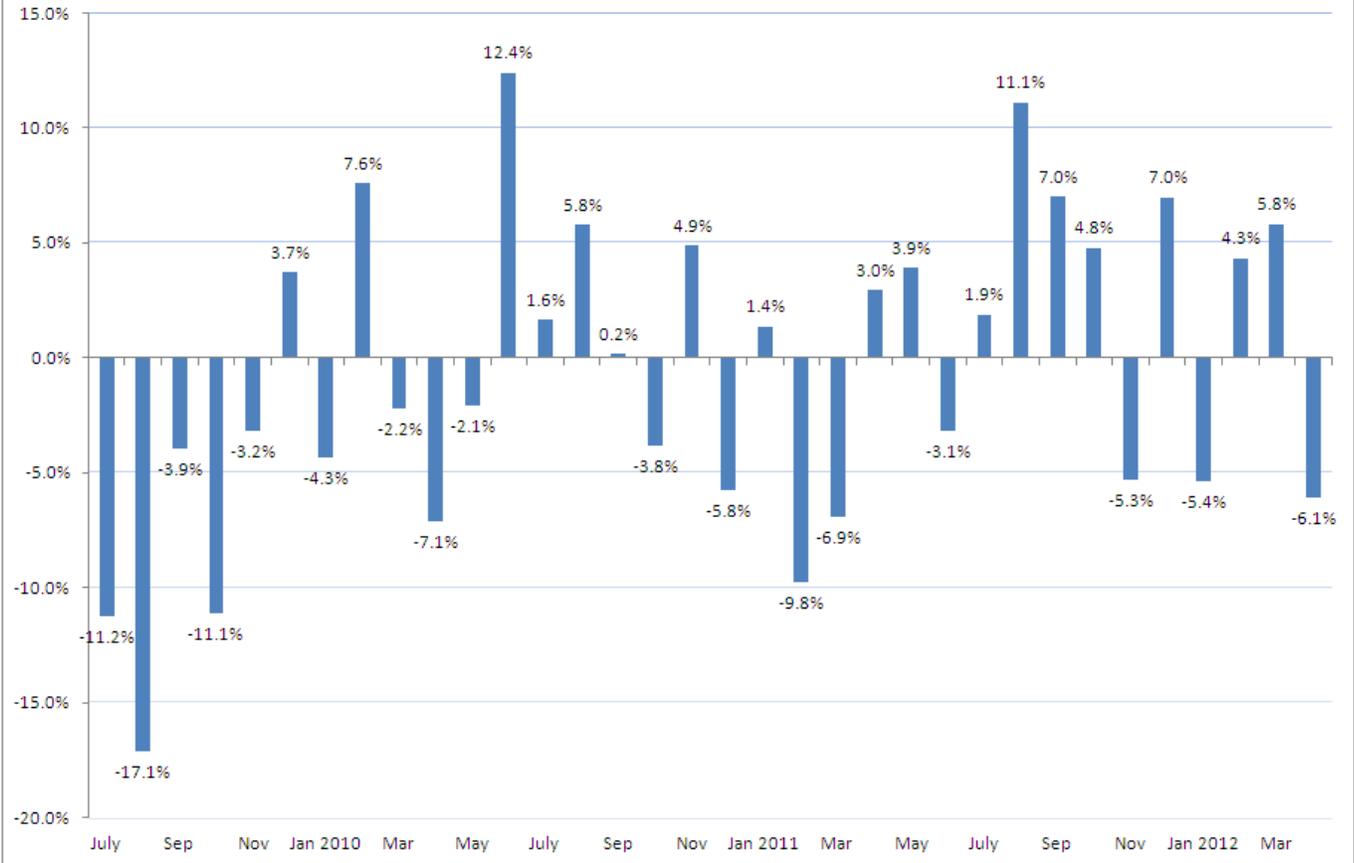
Taxable Diesel Gallons Report: www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/reports/Diesel_10_Year_Report.pdf



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Percent Change in Diesel Gallons Compared to Twelve Months Prior From July 2009 Through April 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.

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