

NACS Consumer Fuels Report

May 2018 monthly survey results (released May 17, 2018)

Overview

This consumer survey is part of the NACS Retail Fuels Report, which provides a comprehensive overview of the fuels retailing industry. More information, analysis, statistics and graphics can be found at www.convenience.org/fuels.

NACS conducted monthly interviews from January 2013 through December 2017 and in 2018 is conducting six surveys per year examining fuels and other topics. We have included comparative metrics for the same month in previous years if applicable.

This summary covers very basic information. Reporters seeking more demographic information can contact NACS Vice President of Strategic Industry Initiatives Jeff Lenard at (703) 518-4272 or jlenard@convenience.org.

Methodology

NACS commissioned Penn, Schoen and Berland Associates LLC to conduct 1,501 online interviews with adult Americans on May 7-11, 2018. The margin of error for the entire sample is +/- 2.87% at the 95% confidence interval and higher for subgroups. Below are overall responses. NACS also examined crosstabs not included in this summary.

Gas prices related to purchasing behavior

Compared to the last 30 days, do you think you will drive more, less, or about the same over the next 30 days?

(%) Gas consumers MAY '18	APR	MAR	FEB	JAN	DEC	NOV	OCT	SEP	AUG	JUL	JUN	MAY '17	
Drive much less	3	2	*	1	*	3	2	2	3	3	2	4	3
Drive somewhat less	8	7	*	6	*	7	6	5	7	5	6	6	5
Drive about the same	71	76	*	70	*	64	71	72	66	68	68	62	70
Drive somewhat more	10	11	*	16	*	18	14	15	17	16	17	19	14
Drive a lot more	8	5	*	8	*	9	2	2	7	8	7	10	8

*not asked in January 2018 or March 2018

(%) Gas consumers MAY '18	MAY '17	MAY '16	MAY '15	MAY '14	MAY '13	
Drive much less	3	3	4	3	5	4
Drive somewhat less	8	5	8	7	10	9
Drive about the same	71	70	70	69	66	70
Drive somewhat more	10	14	14	16	12	12
Drive a lot more	8	8	4	5	7	4

Generally speaking, how do you feel about the economy?

(%) Gas consumers MAY '18	APR	MAR	FEB	JAN	DEC	NOV	OCT	SEP	AUG	JUL	JUN	MAY '17
Very pessimistic	8	7	*	8	8	8	7	8	8	8	9	7
Somewhat pessimistic	31	32	*	32	27	31	32	38	33	32	34	32
Somewhat optimistic	43	48	*	44	45	47	46	45	48	49	46	48
Very optimistic	17	14	*	16	20	14	15	9	12	11	12	12

*not asked in March 2018

(%) Gas consumers MAY '18	MAY '17	MAY '16	MAY '15	MAY '14	MAY '13
Very pessimistic	8	7	15	14	18
Somewhat pessimistic	31	32	41	38	42
Somewhat optimistic	43	48	37	42	39
Very optimistic	17	12	7	6	8

How much do gas prices today impact your feelings on the economy? They have...

(%) Gas consumers MAY '18	APR	MAR	FEB	JAN	DEC	NOV	OCT	SEP	AUG	JUL	JUN	MAY '17
Great impact	26	22	*	24	*	22	25	24	26	21	24	27
Some impact	51	50	*	53	*	50	49	52	57	50	51	53
Little impact	15	21	*	18	*	22	20	18	14	22	17	17
No impact	8	8	*	5	*	6	6	7	3	7	7	7

*not asked in January 2018 or March 2018

(%) Gas consumers MAY '18	MAY '17	MAY '16	MAY '15	MAY '14	MAY '13
Great impact	26	23	31	32	40
Some impact	51	53	48	53	46
Little impact	15	17	17	12	10
No impact	8	7	4	3	4

Do you think that gas prices today are higher or lower than they were 30 days ago, or are they about the same?

(%) Gas consumers MAY '18	APR	MAR	FEB	JAN	DEC	NOV	OCT	SEP	AUG	JUL	JUN	MAY '17	
Gas prices today are much higher than they were	27	16	*	15	14	10	12	12	32	5	4	10	9
Gas prices today are somewhat higher than they were	52	52	*	51	42	36	44	47	50	34	18	38	47
Gas prices today are about the same as they were	15	26	*	26	36	39	30	26	12	44	35	41	33
Gas prices today are somewhat lower than they were	3	5	*	6	6	12	11	13	4	15	36	10	9
Gas prices today are much lower than they were	3	1	*	2	2	2	3	1	2	2	7	2	2

*not asked in March 2018

(%) Gas consumers MAY '18	MAY '17	MAY '16	MAY '15	MAY '14	MAY '13	
Gas prices today are much higher than they were	27	9	19	18	30	14
Gas prices today are somewhat higher than they were	52	47	53	52	49	28
Gas prices today are about the same as they were	15	33	18	15	17	29
Gas prices today are somewhat lower than they were	3	9	8	12	3	26
Gas prices today are much lower than they were	3	2	2	2	1	3

Thinking into the future, do you think gas prices in 30 days will be...

(%) Gas consumers MAY '18	APR	MAR	FEB	JAN	DEC	NOV	OCT	SEP	AUG	JUL	JUN	MAY '17	
Much higher than today	18	10	*	9	*	7	7	6	15	5	5	7	8
Somewhat higher than today	49	47	*	45	*	40	39	30	40	37	36	48	50
About the same as today	25	36	*	37	*	44	42	41	27	49	46	36	35
Somewhat lower than today	6	5	*	8	*	8	11	22	17	8	11	8	6
Much lower than today	2	1	*	1	*	1	1	2	1	0	2	1	1

*not asked in January 2018 or March 2018

(%) Gas consumers MAY '18	MAY '17	MAY '16	MAY '15	MAY '14	MAY '13	
Much higher than today	18	8	17	14	17	10
Somewhat higher than today	49	50	52	58	49	47
About the same as today	25	35	27	23	27	34
Somewhat lower than today	6	6	4	4	6	7
Much lower than today	2	1	0	1	1	1

What is the average price of regular gasoline in the area where you live?

(\$ Gas price MAY '18	APR	MAR	FEB	JAN	DEC	NOV	OCT	SEP	AUG	JUL	JUN	MAY '17	
Median	2.80	2.65	*	2.59	2.65	2.47	2.50	2.50	2.59	2.29	2.22	2.35	2.35
Mean	2.96	2.81	*	2.69	2.50	2.56	2.59	2.60	2.64	2.40	2.36	2.49	2.47
Mode	3.00	2.50	*	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.49	2.25	2.00	2.25	2.20
Standard deviation	0.75	0.65	*	0.46	0.52	0.47	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.48	0.55	0.62	0.55

*not asked in March 2018

(\$ Gas price MAY '18	MAY '17	MAY '16	MAY '15	MAY '14	
Median	2.80	2.33	2.00	2.40	3.58

Note: The national weekly average gas price closest to the polling period was \$2.817, according to the weekly "OPIS Retail Fuel Report" information dated May 7, 2018.

NEW Questions for 2018 on specific spending behavior:

Do you think this month you are likely to...?

(% Gas consumers MAY '18	APR '18	FEB '18	Gender		Age			Region				
			M	F	18-34	35-49	50+	NE	MW	S	W	
Eat out much more	3	3	3	3	2	6	2	1	5	0	3	3
Eat out somewhat more	8	7	10	10	5	10	8	5	8	7	6	10
Eat out about the same	56	62	56	56	55	44	54	65	59	60	54	51
Eat out somewhat less	19	17	20	17	21	27	17	15	16	19	21	17
Eat out much less	15	10	12	14	17	14	18	14	11	13	16	20

Do you think this month you are likely to...?

(% Gas consumers MAY '18	APR '18	FEB '18	Gender		Age			Region				
			M	F	18-34	35-49	50+	NE	MW	S	W	
Spend much more on typical non-gas household purchases (for example, groceries, clothing, etc.)	4	5	6	4	4	8	5	2	4	4	5	4
Spend somewhat more	12	11	16	13	10	15	12	9	16	11	12	8
Spend about the same	61	68	59	62	60	50	58	72	63	65	60	58
Spend somewhat less	15	13	15	13	17	17	18	12	13	14	15	18
Spend much less on typical non-gas household purchases (for example, groceries, clothing, etc.)	7	3	4	7	8	10	7	5	4	5	8	11

Definition of Crosstabs

Crosstab		Definition of crosstab	% total
% Gas Consumers		American adults who purchase gasoline for a vehicle	100
Gender	M	Male	49
	F	Female	51
Age	18-34	Age 18-34	29
	35-49	Age 35-49	30
	50+	Age 50 or over	41
Region	NE	Lives in the Northeast	18
	MW	Lives in the Midwest	22
	S	Lives in the South	37
	W	Lives in the West	23