

Gas prices renew upward climb

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Just when it appeared the gasoline price surge was coming to an end, it reversed itself. In the past week, the national average price for a gallon of regular jumped by more than seven cents to \$2.87. Oregon's average price followed suit, going up more than six cents per gallon to \$3.07.

"A week ago, it appeared prices were leveling. Now, we're facing the potential to set new highs in average prices," said AAA Public Affairs Director Elliott Eki. "Although the national average price is well off the record set in September 2005, Oregon and its four measured metro areas are flirting with new highs."

Oregon's highest recorded statewide average price came in late May 2006 at \$3.11—less than a nickel higher than the current average price. Of the state's four major metropolitan areas, Salem is less than two cents away from surpassing the record set on June 1, 2006. Across the river, Vancouver's current average price is only a tenth of a cent off its all-time high set at the end of last May.

Even though the price of crude oil lingers just below the \$65 per barrel level, there has been no indication of a shortage of motor fuels. With the Memorial Day holiday only five weeks away, it's still too early to forecast where the national and statewide average prices might be at that time. Motorists, however, should put into daily practice fuel saving measures, such as consolidating errands, avoiding fast starts and stops, observing speed limits, maintaining proper tire air pressure, and regularly maintaining their vehicles to be sure they operate efficiently.

At \$3.07, Oregon's average gasoline price is tied with Nevada's at 4th highest in the nation. California has the highest average price at \$3.34 followed by Washington at \$3.11 and Hawaii at \$3.08. Idaho's statewide average price moved up another dime to \$2.85. New Jersey has the lowest statewide average price at \$2.66. The national average diesel price moved up to \$2.94 per gallon in the past week; California's held at \$3.18; Washington's remains at \$3.05; Idaho's and Nevada's are still \$3.01, and Oregon's is unchanged at \$2.92.

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