

Holiday Drivers Hold Their Breath as Petrol Price Breaks Through 4 a Gallon

UK average petrol prices topped 4 a gallon for the first time ever on Sunday, says the AA Motoring Trust. Diesel reached the same point in early April and now costs 4.19 a gallon.

With 10 days to go before the start of the summer holiday season, drivers watch anxiously to see whether this week's drop in the price of crude oil continues and translates quickly into lower prices at the pump.

Petrol averaged 88.1 pence per litre on Monday, with diesel costing 92.2 pence per litre. In January, petrol averaged 79.6 pence per litre and diesel 84.8 pence.

Individual motorists are now paying 96.76 per month on petrol, compared to 87.43 at the beginning of the year*. In households with two car-owning adults, this represents a 18.66 hit on family expenditure for the month.

The 8.5 pence per litre difference between January and current July prices means that UK motorists are now spending an extra 6.21 million extra on petrol per day**.

"With summer holidays imminent and many drivers considering long road trips to UK holiday destinations, many are holding their breath that the recent drop in the price of oil will translate quickly into lower prices at the pump," says Ruth Bridger of the AA Motoring Trust.

In mid-June, when the price of Brent crude oil reached 55 dollars a barrel, the average UK petrol price was 85.5 pence per litre.

NOTES TO EDITORS: * The average mileage of a typical privately-owned car is 8,700 miles. Averaging 30 miles per gallon, it consumes 290 gallons or 1318 litres of petrol per year.

** UK consumption of unleaded petrol in 2003 was 19.72 million tonnes (source: DTI) or 73 million litres per day.

The average car-owning family spends more on motoring than on housing, food and leisure. The AA Motoring Trust's report ["Cost of Motoring - 2005"](#) (PDF 74K) shows that the cost of running a petrol car has risen by six per cent since last year, with diesel cars 5.3 per cent higher. The increases are due mainly to the soaring cost of car fuel and unusually high depreciation.