

Gasoline Prices: Half Say Ouch

About half of Americans are feeling financial pain from rising gasoline prices, the most in polls the past year. But it could be worse: Just one in six say it hurts a lot.

Forty-eight percent in this random-sample telephone survey for ABCNews.com say recent increases in the price of gasoline have caused financial hardship in their households. That's up from 36 percent in a Gallup poll 11 months ago.

Still, considerably fewer, 17 percent, say the hardship is a "serious" one.

	Have rising gasoline prices caused you financial hardship?	
	Yes	No
4/29/01	48%	52
6/25/00*	44	56
5/24/00*	36	64

*Gallup

Income, naturally, is the biggest determining factor. Among people with household incomes over \$100,000 a year, 29 percent say gas prices are hurting them financially. But among those with incomes under \$35,000, this jumps to 55 percent.

Gasoline prices have had less impact in the Northeast, where 36 percent report gas-fueled financial woes; it rises to about half elsewhere. People who live outside of metropolitan areas and those with larger than two-person households are more apt to say they're suffering, presumably because they have farther to go or more people to ferry around.

The U.S. Department of Energy reports that average retail prices for regular gasoline rose from \$1.44 per gallon April 2 to \$1.63 on April 30. Prices rose similarly last spring and early summer – from \$1.46 on May 8, 2000, to \$1.66 on June 26.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News.com survey was conducted by telephone April 24-29, 2001, among a random national sample of 1,020 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS Intersearch of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet at:
<http://www.abcnews.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

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88. Have recent price increases in gasoline caused any financial hardship for you or others in your household, or not?

	-----Yes-----				
	Net	Serious	Not serious	No	No opin.
4/29/01	48	17	30	52	*
6/25/00*	44	na	na	56	*
5/24/00	36			64	*
4/2/00	39			61	*
3/12/00	41			59	*
2/15/00	40	"	"	60	*

*6/25 and previous by Gallup; slightly different wordings.