

*Wisconsin Public Radio & St. Norbert College Survey Center*

THE WISCONSIN SURVEY – FALL 2005  
**GAS PRICES**

**FOR RELEASE AFTER: 8AM WEDNESDAY NOV. 16**

Survey Information:

Number of Adult Wisconsin Resident Respondents: 400  
Interview Period: October 31 – November 11, 2005  
Margin of Error: +/- 5% at the 95% confidence level.

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*As a result of the recent increases in gas prices, have you cut down on the amount of driving you do?*

<b>Yes</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>
<b>Refused</b>	<b>1%</b>

*As a result of the recent increases in gas prices, have you cut back household spending on other things?*

<b>Yes</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>49%</b>
<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>
<b>Refused</b>	<b>0%</b>

Not surprisingly, the percentages above are reflective largely of differences in income. Those earning under \$50,000 per year were more likely to say they had changed their driving habits than those who earned more, although the differences were not large. Only those earning over \$100,000 per year had less than a majority saying they had changed their driving habits. The highest percentage was for those in the \$26,000-\$35,000 income category, where 66% said they had modified their driving habits due to gas prices. As with income, this hit the elderly and the youngest respondents the hardest.

As seen above, fewer respondents said they had cut back on other household items due to gas prices than said they had changed driving habits. Again, this was heavily dependent on income as one might expect. For those earning under \$15,000 per year (56% of whom are over 55), 72% said they had cut back on other items due to gas prices, compared to 38% of those earning over \$100,000 per year.

While the type of car one owned was significantly related to both changing driving and changing spending habits due to gas prices, it was interesting to see the difference between the two questions. Given that income is related to type of car (see below), it is not too surprising that those who drive heavy trucks for personal transport were the least likely to say they had changed their driving habits (40%) while those who drive compacts were the most likely to change (71%). This may be due to income, but heavy truck drivers were still less likely to change habits than SUV/minivan drivers (50% of SUV drivers said they had changed their driving habits).

However, this changes to the opposite when asked about cutting back on spending for other household items due to gas prices. Here, the heavy truck drivers were the most likely to say they had cut back on other items (58%) whereas compact car and SUV drivers were less so (55%) and midsize car and light trucks were the least to say they had cut back on spending on other items (49% and 37% respectively).

*Would you or have your considered buying a hybrid engine vehicle?*

<b>Yes</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Refused</b>	<b>1%</b>

The most significant factor here was age. For those under 25, 79% said they have or would consider buying a hybrid vehicle, while only 22% of those over 65 said they would do so. The rest of the age categories are between 51% and 56% of respondents saying they have or would consider it. Income is also a factor, consideration actually increases with income (though mind that the lowest income categories have a significant percentage of seniors in them).

Type of car is also a factor, those who already drive compacts and light truck owners were most likely to consider it (54% of respondents in each of these categories), followed closely by minivan/SUV drivers (51%), while heavy truck drivers were the least likely to consider it (only 36% said they had or would).

Education is a factor here as well. For those with graduate degrees, 71% said they had or would consider buying a hybrid vehicle compared to 57% of college graduates, 43% of those the some college or technical degress, 32% of high school graduates and 26% of those with less than high school (many of whom are over 55).

Gender was not significant.

*For each of the following, please tell me how much of the blame for current gas prices you think each is responsible for; a lot, some, not much, or none.*

	A Lot	Some	Not Much	None	Not Sure	Refused
Recent Gulf Hurricanes	21%	50%	17%	12%	1%	<1%
The War in Iraq	27%	42%	16%	14%	1%	1%
Domestic oil companies	62%	28%	4%	3%	3%	<1%
OPEC and foreign oil producing countries	39%	44%	6%	5%	6%	<1%
Gas Station Owners	9%	22%	28%	39%	2%	<1%
The federal government	38%	40%	10%	10%	2%	1%
Consumer driving habits	24%	48%	13%	13%	2%	1%

As seen in the table above, domestic oil companies are perceived to be the primary cause for the recent increases in gas prices. At the second tier is OPEC and the federal government, followed by a third tier of Iraq, consumer driving habits and the recent hurricanes. Least likely to be thought of as being a significant cause are gas station owners. In terms of demographics, Democrats were slightly more likely than Republicans to say that the federal government and the war in Iraq had “a lot” to do with recent gas price increases. There were no other significant relationships between the categories above and different demographic groups of respondents.

*In which of the following automobile categories would you classify the car or truck that you most frequently drive for your own personal use:*

<b>Sub-Compact/Compact Car</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Midsized to Large Car</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Minivan or SUV</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Light pickup truck</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Heavy pickup truck or van</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>I do not currently drive a car or truck and/or I primarily use public transport</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Refused</b>	<b>1%</b>

The table below should be read across, i.e., of heavy pickup truck owners, 63% said they were Republicans.

	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Other
Subcompact/Compact Car	53%	21%	12%	13%
Midsized to Large Car	35%	34%	23%	6%
Minivan/SUV	30%	38%	25%	5%
Light Pickup Truck	29%	29%	29%	11%
Heavy Pickup Truck/Van	13%	63%	4%	8%
Don't drive/primary is public transportation	43%	14%	29%	7%

The table below reads down, i.e., 32% of Democrats drive compact or subcompact cars.

	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Other
Subcompact/Compact Car	32%	14%	12%	37%
Midsized to Large Car	37%	41%	44%	30%
Minivan/SUV	18%	26%	27%	13%
Light Pickup Truck	6%	6%	10%	10%
Heavy Pickup Truck/Van	2%	12%	1%	7%
Don't drive/primary is public transportation	4%	2%	5%	3%

Most standard demographics were related to the type of car owned. Older people were most likely to drive midsized to large cars and 7% of seniors said they did not drive or relied primarily on public transport. However, the youngest group of respondents was the most likely to rely on public transport – 15% of those 18-25 said this. The most likely SUV/minivan drivers were women (29% compared to 14% of men) and to be in the 35-

44 age category. Pickup truck drivers (light and heavy) were most likely to be men (22% of men drove these compared to 5% of women) and to be in the 35-54 age category.

The following table reads across the rows, so for example, 35% of those who earn over \$100,000 per year said they drove SUVs or minivans.

	Subcompact/ Compact Car	Midsized to Large Car	Minivan/ SUV	Light Pickup Truck	Heavy Pickup Truck/Van	Don't drive/primary is public transportation
<\$15,000	25%	34%	13%	3%	6%	19%
\$15-\$25,000	21%	41%	18%	4%	9%	4%
\$26-\$35,000	22%	48%	22%	2%	4%	2%
\$36-\$50,000	27%	37%	21%	10%	5%	0%
\$51-\$75,000	32%	35%	15%	12%	3%	2%
\$76-\$100,000	21%	35%	29%	8%	8%	0%
>\$100,000	10%	36%	35%	10%	9%	0%