



**News Release**

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**NEARLY 2.7 MILLION VIRGINIANS EXPECTED TO TRAVEL THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**  
**SAYS AAA**

*Year-End Holiday Travel Figures Forecasted to be Four Percent Greater than Historic Average*

**VIRGINIA BEACH, VA (Wednesday, December 19, 2012)** – AAA projects that nearly 2.7 million Virginians will travel 50 miles or more from home for the 2012 year-end holiday season (Saturday, December 22 to Tuesday, January 1), a very slight statistical increase of just four tenths of a percentage point from last year. Virginia’s projected number of travelers this year-end is approximately 900 individuals shy of the decade high mark seen in the Commonwealth during the 2010/2011 season and is four percent higher than the overall average number for the past ten years.

“The fact that the number of Virginians expected to travel this year-end exceeds the decade high average by four percent illustrates the importance of being with loved ones for the holidays, regardless of a struggling economy,” said Georjeane Blumling, Vice President of Public Relations for AAA Tidewater Virginia. “The recovery rate of the number of holiday travelers has once again out-paced the economic recovery.”

**BY CAR / GAS PRICES:** As gas prices have been on a steady decline and are expected to continue this downward trend, road trips continue to make up the bulk of holiday travel. Over 2.4 million Virginians, or 90 percent of holiday travelers, will hit the roads later this week. Gas prices in Virginia today average \$3.10, just .05 cents lower than this day last year.

*Gas Prices as of December 19, 2012, for a gallon of self-serve regular gasoline:*

	Price Today	Price Last Month	Price Last Year
National	\$3.23	\$3.42	\$3.22
Virginia	\$3.10	\$3.24	\$3.15
Charlottesville	\$3.01	\$3.18	\$3.12
Norfolk	\$3.05	\$3.18	\$3.10
Richmond	\$3.03	\$3.19	\$3.11
Roanoke	\$2.99	\$3.15	\$3.09

**AIR:** Air travel in Virginia is expected to increase 3.2 percent, as almost 151,000 (150,715) holiday travelers will take to the skies. Those traveling by air will find lower airfares according to AAA’s Leisure Travel Index. For the year-end holiday period the average lowest round-trip rate is \$203 for the top 40 U.S. air routes, a three percent decrease from last year.

**AVERAGE TRAVEL DISTANCE INCREASES:** According to the survey of intended travelers, the average distance traveled by Americans during holiday period is expected to be 760 miles, further than last year when travelers planned to log 726 miles. “This increase is likely due to the increased number of airline trips which are often much farther than those taken on the road,” Blumling added.

**MEDIAN SPENDING UP NEARLY SIX PERCENT:** Median spending is expected to be \$759, a six percent increase compared to the expected median spending of intended holiday travelers (\$718) in 2011.

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*As part of North America's largest motoring and leisure travel organization, AAA Tidewater Virginia provides its more than 325,000 members with travel, insurance, financial and automotive-related services. Since its founding AAA Tidewater Virginia has been a leader and advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. For more information, visit [AAA.com](http://AAA.com) and follow us on Twitter at [Twitter.com/AAATWnews](https://twitter.com/AAATWnews).*

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