



Media Alert

Media Contact:
Georjeane Blumling, Ph.D.
Vice President Public Relations
757-233-3825
[Gblum@tidewater.aaa.com](mailto:gblum@tidewater.aaa.com)

PLEASE NOTE: The spokesperson for AAA Tidewater will be available for interviews on May 23rd and 24th 2012. Please call Georjeane Blumling at 757-233-3825 or e-mail her at gblum@tidewater.aaa.com .

AAA EXPECTS VIRGINIA TRAVEL TO TREND WITH NATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

VIRIGNIA BEACH, Va., (May 21, 2012) - High gas prices don't appear to be deterring Virginians from traveling this Memorial Day weekend with a little over one million expected to celebrate the traditional kick off to the summer travel season with a trip of 50 miles or more from home. **In Virginia, 923,389 people are expected to make a trip by car over the Memorial weekend**, a slight increase (1.2 percent) which is in line with what is expected across the nation.

"After three years of strong increases in the number of Virginian's traveling for all major holidays, this year's Memorial Day forecast reflects the continued slow and steady economic recovery in the Commonwealth and across the nation," said Georjeane Blumling, Vice President of Public Relations for AAA Tidewater Virginia.

While overall travel is expected to increase slightly for Memorial Day this year, a significantly smaller number will be using air travel for the trip. Air travel in Virginia is expected to decrease by 5.6 percent from last year's numbers most likely due to increased ticket pricing over last year. Other forms of travel including buses, trains, water-craft and multi-modal travel are expected to increase as much as 20 percent from last year in the Commonwealth.

"There is a change in the demographic make-up of this year's traveler because gas prices are lowered from last year. However, gas prices still have a disproportionate impact on those in lower income brackets because gas prices represent a larger percentage of their disposable income despite the slight decrease this year," Blumling added.

In Virginia the price of unleaded regular has decreased to \$3.575 which is down \$0.32 cents in the past month and \$3.88 since last year. Gas prices in Hampton Roads currently at \$3.59 have made an even bigger swing from one month ago at \$3.88 and from \$3.90 last year at this time.

Gas Prices as of May 21 2012, for a gallon of self-serve regular gasoline:

	Price Today	Price Last Month	Price Last Year
National	3.68	3.87	3.87
Virginia	3.51	3.85	3.80
Charlottesville	3.44	3.81	3.75
Norfolk	3.53	3.84	3.84
Richmond	3.50	3.84	3.78
Roanoke	3.36	3.75	3.63

Declining gas prices over this week may lead to "last minute trips" and provide a surge in travelers for the long weekend.

-MORE-

Page 2 of 2- AAA Expects Virginia Travel To Trend With National Expectations

“Many travelers reported that they will be more frugal with their vacation funds this year, and may take advantage of historical sites, participate in fun, but free, outdoor activities like hiking, with less shopping and eating out than in years past,” Blumling said. This year’s median spending for the Memorial Day trip is expected to be \$702, only slightly more than the median spending last year which was \$692.

AAA’s projections are based on economic forecasting and research by HIS Global Insight. The Boston-based economic research consulting firm teamed with AAA in 2009 to jointly analyze travel trends for the major holiday periods each year. AAA has been reporting on holiday travel trends for more than two decades. The complete AAA/HIS Global Insight 2011 Memorial Day holiday Travel Forecast can be found at AAA.com/news.

The spokesperson for AAA Tidewater Virginia will be available for interviews on May 23rd and 24th 2012. Please call Georjeane Blumling at 757-233-3825 or e-mail her at gblum@tidewater.aaa.com .