



News Release

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AAA EXPECTS RECORD NUMBER OF VIRGINIANS TO TRAVEL OVER THE 4TH OF JULY HOLIDAY- HIGHEST VOLUME IN THE PAST DECADE

Over 1.2 Million Virginians Expected to Travel During Extra Long Holiday Week

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA (June 26, 2012) – A continuing decline in prices at the pump and the mid-week timing of July 4th combine to raise expected holiday travel in the Commonwealth to over 1.2 million Virginians for 2012. This is the highest total in Virginia since 2007 and an expected 4.6 percent increase over 2011. The mid-week holiday affords travelers more departure day options and potentially longer holiday vacations.

Auto travel will lead the way in those increases with over one million Virginians expected to hit the road, thus breaking the one million auto traveler total for the first time in the Commonwealth. This is the highest total for Virginia in the last 10 years and a 3.8 percent increase over 2011.

These figures mirror the national expected 2012 Independence Day holiday travel volume which will tie the past decade's previous high mark set in 2007 and represents a near 42 percent increase from 2009. The Independence Day holiday travel period is defined as Tuesday, July 3 to Sunday, July 8.

Since July 4 falls on a Wednesday, the calendar will play a role in driving holiday travel volume as the mid-week holiday expands the traditional five-day travel period to six days and provides the option of including a weekend and two week days on either side of the actual holiday. When asked about day of departure, 54 percent of people intending to travel this holiday plan to begin their trip prior to the start of the work-week that includes July 4. Response percentages by trip departure day are:

- 25 percent - Friday, June 29
- 16 percent - Saturday, June 30
- 13 percent - Sunday, July 1
- 11 percent - Monday, July 2
- 19 percent - Tuesday, July 3
- 16 percent - Wednesday, July 4

“AAA’s projection for a decade high number of Independence Day travelers is being fed by Americans’ appetite for travel, a mid-week holiday and lower gas prices,” said Judy Ocasio, Vice President, Travel Services and Branch Operations for AAA Tidewater Virginia. “This is the second holiday this year where travelers indicated a determination to travel while economizing by actively seeking value-added travel options and activities.”

“A healthy travel industry is critical to the overall well-being of our economy and consistent increases in travel are encouraging,” added Ocasio.

Impact of gasoline prices on travel plans

The price of gasoline is another factor expected to play a role in spurring intentions to travel this Independence Day holiday period. On April 6, motorists experienced a year-to-date peak

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average price of \$3.71 per gallon for regular gasoline. The current national average price of regular gasoline is \$3.40 per gallon, .31 cents lower than the April peak and .17 cents less than this time last year.

Gas Prices as of June 26, 2012, for a gallon of self-serve regular gasoline:

	Price Today	Price Last Month	Price Last Year
National	3.397	3.645	3.575
Virginia	3.197	3.449	3.471
Charlottesville	3.120	3.388	3.421
Norfolk	3.226	3.479	3.487
Richmond	3.203	3.459	3.432
Roanoke	3.087	3.459	3.286

AAA offers mobile travel planning resources

AAA's digital tools for travel planning 'on the go' include eTourBook guides for 101 top North American destinations, free to members at AAA.com/ebooks. Choose from city titles, like Orlando, New York and the award-winning Las Vegas, as well as National Parks.

Free AAA apps for iPhone and Android devices use GPS navigation to help travelers map a route, locate nearby member discounts and find current gas prices. Travelers can learn about AAA apps and AAA Mobile Web at AAA.com/mobile.

Travelers can find thousands of AAA Approved and Diamond Rated hotels and restaurants using AAA's digital travel planning tools or online at AAA.com/Travel. Every AAA Approved establishment offers the assurance of acceptable cleanliness, comfort and hospitality, and ratings of One to Five Diamonds help travelers find the right match for amenities and services.

AAA's projections are based on economic forecasting and research by IHS Global Insight. The Boston-based economic research and consulting firm teamed with AAA in 2009 to jointly analyze travel trends during the major holidays. AAA has been reporting on holiday travel trends for more than two decades. The complete AAA / IHS Global Insight 2012 Independence Day Holiday Travel Forecast can be found at NewsRoom.AAA.com.

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