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NEWS

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Five Tips for Dealing with Pain at the Pump

Financial Professional Helps Consumers Conserve Gas and Money

ATLANTA, GA (July 22, 2008) – The average price of a gallon of gasoline nationally having now surpassed \$4.00, is almost a dollar higher than it was a year ago. One of the culprits: the skyrocketing price of oil which continues to reach record highs. In fact, experts say that, generally, for every dollar increase in oil prices, gas prices increase by 2.4 cents a gallon.

According to Don Patrick, an Atlanta-based independent financial professional, surging global oil demand will ensure an upward trend in oil pricing. “Decisions being made by OPEC and other oil-producing countries, stagnant production in Iraq, and ongoing concerns about political and supply stability in a number of oil-producing countries mean that we’ll have to deal with higher crude and gasoline prices for some time,” says Patrick. Yet, as the Joint Economic Committee’s report concludes, the most significant, long-term factor driving oil prices higher may be the greatly increased and permanent demand for oil in developing countries such as China and India. This means that although prices could fall in the near term, we better get used to higher prices as a new fact of life.

With this kind of pain at the pump, it may be time to develop some long-term survival strategies to deal with high gas prices. The following pointers can help consumers adjust to life at over \$4 a gallon:

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Shop Around

“Driving all over town looking for the best deal on gas burns precious fuel – the fuel you’re trying to save,” says Patrick. “Instead, log on to a website like www.GasBuddy.com to help you pinpoint the cheapest gas near you.”

Drive to conserve fuel

Patrick advises consumers to tune-up cars regularly, keep tires properly inflated and reduce the amount of stuff in the trunk and backseat of the car. “Another way to conserve fuels is to drive within the speed limit on the highway as engines operate most efficiently in the 55 to 60 miles per hour range,” says Patrick. “You’ll also save fuel by braking or accelerating gradually.” Patrick also suggests that instead of running the air conditioning constantly, it’s most efficient to run it at faster speeds but roll down the windows when stalled in traffic.

Choose public transit

Cities from Boston to Los Angeles are reporting increased numbers of people using mass transit. In fact, according to the American Public Transportation Association (APTAA), Americans took 2.6 billion trips on public transportation in the first three months of 2008, 85 million more trips than the same period last year. Not surprisingly, the Federal Highway Administration has reported that the vehicle miles traveled on our nation’s roads declined by 2.3 percent in the first quarter. “Many people in larger cities consider taking public transportation, but don’t really see the tangible benefit,” says Patrick. “There is a great website that shows exactly how much you can save by taking public transportation at www.publictransportation.org.”

Reduce your carbon foot print

Patrick advises that people try to bicycle or walk whenever possible. In addition to saving on gas, the decision is a healthier move. The editors of *Bicycling* magazine report that they see big changes in urban centers that may be the beginning of a far-reaching pro-cycling movement. “Another way to reduce your carbon footprint is to carpool,” says Patrick. “In addition to carpooling to work and school, take the time to organize weekly errands into fewer trips and perhaps organize neighborhood transportation and errand schedules.”

Think small

If you're in the market for a new vehicle, try buying one that is more fuel-efficient. The U.S. Department of Energy's Fuel Economy site (fueleconomy.gov) or the EPA's Green Vehicle Guide (www.epa.gov/greenvehicles) provide extensive information on which vehicles get the best gas mileage. Patrick also advises consumers to take a good look at auto manufacturers that are offering new car buyers three years of gas at \$2.99 a gallon. Other car dealers are offering a year or two of free gas with the purchase of a new car.

About Don Patrick and Integrated Financial Group

Don Patrick, Managing Director of Integrated Financial Group in Atlanta, Georgia, has been serving clients as a financial advisor for over 26 years. Patrick earned his MBA from the University of Southern California. Undergraduate studies were completed at Loyola University Los Angeles in the areas of finance and economics. He served as a pilot in the U.S. Air Force, graduating first in his class. He is also a member of the Financial Planning Association, the nation's largest organization of professionals dedicated to championing the financial planning process. He has completed additional studies and passed a rigorous certification examination and is authorized to use the CFP[®] mark of distinction. Integrated Financial Group, an independent financial planning consortium of advisors, delivers practical, effective financial solutions aimed at addressing the long-term financial planning needs of their clients.

For five years listeners in south Florida relied on Patrick to deliver sound, accurate financial advice as co-host of a radio talk program. He taught financial planning at Georgia State, North Metro Technical College and Gwinnett Technical College. Listed in Who's Who of Investment Management Consultants, Patrick recently authored a book titled *Keep Your Nest Egg from Cracking – What You Need to Know*. He is also a regular contributor to numerous financial trade publications.

Visit www.integrated-financial-group.com for more information about Mr. Patrick and the consortium of advisors.

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NOTE:

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