

MEDIA RELEASE

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Higher fuel prices keep Kiwis' cars at home

Rising fuel prices are forcing nearly a third of Kiwis to drive their car less often, Research New Zealand polling shows.

Research New Zealand director Emanuel Kalafatelis said the poll found the rising cost of petrol and diesel over the past 12 months had resulted in 32% of Kiwis saying they were driving their car less often. He says the poll also showed if the price of fuel rose to \$2.00 or more per litre, over half of Kiwis said they would use their car less (54%).

“This poll has backed up what we often hear anecdotally. The high cost of fuel is hitting Kiwis hard and it’s making us change our driving habits,” Mr Kalafatelis said. “While the actual numbers saying they’ll drive less may not eventuate in the end, the results do show that Kiwis are very concerned with the price of fuel.”

The poll showed females claimed they were altering their driving habits more than males. While 35% of females said they were driving less, only 29% of males said they were.

There was also variation in opinion among people of differing household income. Those on higher incomes were less likely to state they had changed their driving habits due to rising fuel prices. Kiwis with incomes of \$70,000 or more were least likely to state they were driving less (70%).

If the price rose to \$2.00 or more per litre 64% of people earning under \$40,000 were more likely to say they would use their car less, compared to 49% of those who earned \$70,000 or more.

Polling was conducted between 12 February and 18 February before this week’s petrol price increases.

The Research New Zealand poll of 501 people aged 15 and over was conducted by telephone between the 12 and 18 February. The maximum margin of error is +/- 4.7 % (at the 95% confidence level). The data has been weighted to ensure it is an accurate representation of New Zealand's general population. The poll was not taken on behalf of any organisation but as part of Research New Zealand's monthly survey of attitudes and opinions.

Participants were asked: *The cost of diesel and petrol has risen in the past 12 months. If you own a motor vehicle, do you now drive it less often as a result of these increases?*

Would you drive your vehicle less often if the price rose to \$2.00 per litre or more?

Table 1: Impact of fuel increases in the last 12 months (by gender)

The cost of diesel and petrol has risen in the last 12 months. If you own your own motor vehicle, do you now drive it less often as a result of these increases?

	Total	Male	Female
Base =	501	250	251
	%	%	%
Yes, less often	32	29	35
No	57	61	52
Don't own a vehicle	7	8	6
Don't drive	4	1	7
Refused	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 2: Impact of fuel increases in the last 12 months (by household income)

The cost of diesel and petrol has risen in the last 12 months. If you own your own motor vehicle, do you now drive it less often as a result of these increases?

	Total	Under \$40,000	40,000 - \$69,999	\$70,000 plus	Don't know/refused
Base =	501	167	113	174	47
	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, less often	32	35	37	27	24
No	57	42	62	70	54
Don't own a vehicle	7	16	1	1	10
Don't drive	4	7	1	1	11
Refused	0	0	0	1	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 3: Impact of further price increase (by gender)

Would you drive your vehicle less often if the price rose to \$2.00 per litre or more?

	Total	Male	Female
Base =	456*	231	225
	%	%	%
Yes, less often	54	46	61
No	44	53	36
Don't know	2	0	4
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

*Sub-sample based on those respondents who own a motor vehicle.

Table 4: Impact of further price increase (by age)

Would you drive your vehicle less often if the price rose to \$2.00 per litre or more?

	Total	15 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60+
Base =	456*	56	73	104	107	116
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, less often	54	61	48	55	43	58
No	44	34	50	44	56	41
Don't know	2	5	3	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

*Sub-sample based on those respondents who own a motor vehicle.

Table 5: Impact of further price increase (by household income)

Would you drive your vehicle less often if the price rose to \$2.00 per litre or more?

	Total	Under \$40,000	40,000 - \$69,999	\$70,000 plus	Don't know/refused
Base =	456*	135	111	171	39
	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, less often	54	64	50	49	46
No	44	35	50	47	50
Don't know	2	1	0	4	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

*Sub-sample based on those respondents who own a motor vehicle.

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