

Fuel Expectations for 2012

According to the December 2011 study by the U.S. Energy Information Association (EIA), the cost of crude oil per barrel is expected to average \$102 per barrel in 2012, as opposed to \$101 in 2011. Along those same lines, the average price for regular grade gasoline is expected to average \$3.45 per gallon, which is a seven cent increase over the 2011 average. However, analysts project a normal rise in prices in the spring of 2012 before leveling off again.

As compared to last winter (October 1 to March 31), the average household heating oil expenditures are expected to increase by eight percent, while propane costs will rise by five percent on average.

Natural gas costs are projected to decline by three percent. Projections on electricity are two percent lower than last year's levels. One of several reasons we can thank for the lowering costs of some energy is because of the warm winter we are having thus far.

Construction Spending Hit 17-Month High

According to a *Roads And Bridges* article on January 4, 2012, construction spending totaled \$807 billion in November 2011, the highest level since June 2010. Noted increases by the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) are in homebuilding, private nonresidential constructions and public construction.

Total construction spending rose 1.2 percent in November from October and 0.5 percent from the November 2010 level. Private residential construction posted increases of two percent and 3.4 percent. Gains in single-family, multifamily, and residential improvements were noted.

Unfortunately, AGC officials warned that public spending will drop even further in 2012 because of delays in enacting needed infrastructure bills and planned cuts to many federal construction programs. Highway spending increased by 1.9% for the sixth straight month, but was 2.2% below the November 2010 mark.

The federal budget for 2012 includes a more than six percent cut for construction programs. AGC leaders say that Congress is years late in passing much needed water, aviation, and surface transportation legislation. Public spending rose 1.7 percent last month, but declined 5.3 percent from a year earlier.

News and Notes

- ⇒ **Monday, January 16 is a Paid Holiday. No work!**
- ⇒ **According to Accuweather.com, the outlook for January weather through the 24th is very little snow. It appears as though some snow showers will take affect a few times, but nothing of any accumulation.**
- ⇒ **The new boots will be distributed very soon. We apologize for the delay.**
- ⇒ **As you may have noticed, the new insurance rates have been applied to the paychecks. If you see any discrepancies, please call over to the Courthouse so it can be taken care of as soon as possible.**
- ⇒ **As a reminder, if anyone notices a utility crew working along the roadway, please do the following:**
 1. **Observe the job being performed.**
 2. **Who is the company?**
 3. **What is your location?**
 4. **Call the office with any information you can give.**
 5. **Please do not stop and question unless asked to do so. Let a foreman or office personnel inquire about the work being performed.**
 6. **Things to look for: in the right-of-way, traffic control, open cuts in the road or along the berm, boring machines.**

Think Safety!!!

Did you use your seatbelt today?

Is there any trash or loose objects in your cab?

Is the equipment safely parked and secured?

Did I look around for co-workers before moving equipment?

Happy Birthday to...

None!

Happy Anniversary to...

Doug Culbertson

A lot!

Shawn Johnson

7 years

Bob Wilson

7 years