

# Gas Price Rise Has Many Canadians Changing their Commuting Habits

*Those Who Commute are Walking More (37%), Using More Gas-Efficient Cars (31%), Carpooling (24%), Working More Often From Home (14%) or Moving Closer to Work (9%)*

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## Gas Price Rise Has Many Canadians Changing their Commuting Habits

*Those Who Commute are Walking More (37%), Using More Gas-Efficient Cars (31%), Carpooling (24%), Working More Often From Home (14%) or Moving Closer to Work (9%)*

**Ottawa, ON** – As the price of gas continues to rise across the country with seemingly no end in sight, a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Global National and CanWest News Service reveals that Canadians have already started to change their commuting habits as a result. With Canadians who commute averaging about 18 km each way to work, most of them driving (74%), they appear to be feeling the pain at the pumps.

In fact, four in ten (37%) commuters say that in the last six months, the rising price of gas has meant that they are now walking to work more often than before, while some have made other changes to their commuting habits such as using a more gas-efficient car (31%), carpooling (24%), or using public transit more often (19%).

Quebecers and Atlantic Canadians (43%) are most likely to say that they've been walking more often, and Quebecers are also most likely to say they've switched to more fuel-efficient car (41%), and are using public transit more often (23%).

Some Canadians who commute are even are working from home more often (14%), or are moving to a home closer to work (9%), a phenomenon which could portend a small exodus away from suburbia and back into downtown cores. Regionally, Atlantic Canadians (20%)

are most likely to have worked from home more often in the last six months, while Ontarians, Quebecers and British Columbians are all most likely (10%) to report having already moved to a home closer to work.

Interestingly, nearly one half (47%) of commuters have not made any changes to their commuting habits, but are dealing with the rising price of gas in another manner – cutting back on other expenses to pay for the rising price of commuting to work.

Looking ahead to the future, perhaps a future that sees even higher fuel prices, it appears that many are likely to change their habits going forward. A majority (52%) of commuters say they are likely walk to work more often; one half (49%) say they are likely to switch to a more gas-efficient car. Four in ten (39%) believe they're likely to carpool going forward, while three in ten (27%) commuters say they're likely to use public transit more often, and two in ten (19%) will simply work from home more often.

A good deal (14%) of commuters indicate that they are likely to move to a home closer to work. Six in ten (58%) Canadians plan to cut back on other expenses going forward to pay for the rising price of getting to work.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of CanWest News Service and Global Television from June 10 to June 12, 2008. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 1002 adult Canadians was interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population of Canada been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure that the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data.*

## *How Canadians are Getting to Work, and How Far They Have to Go...*

Despite the rise in gas prices, most Canadians who work outside of the home are still driving to work (74%). One in ten (10%) walk, while 8% take a bus. Three percent (3%) bike and 2% of Canadians take a train, while 3% take another mode of transportation. The average commute for Canadians who work outside of the home is 18 kilometres.

- Canadians living in Ontario (77%) are most likely to drive to work, followed by residents of British Columbia (76%), Alberta (75%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (75%), Atlantic Canada (71%), and Quebec (70%).
- Canadians over the age of 34 (79%) are more likely than those aged 18 to 34 (66%) to drive to work.
- Atlantic Canadians (21%) are most likely to walk to work, followed by those living in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (16%), Quebec (11%), Ontario (9%), Alberta (8%), and British Columbia (7%).
- Canadians aged 18 to 34 (13%) are more likely than those over the age of 34 (8%) to walk to work.

On average, Canadians who work outside of their home commute 18km each way to get to work. However, some commutes are longer than others:

- The average commuting distance is longest in Atlantic Canada (21 km), followed by commutes in Ontario (20 km), British Columbia (19 km), Quebec (17 km), Alberta (14 km), and Saskatchewan and Manitoba (14 km).

- Middle-aged Canadians (20 km) have a longer commute than younger (17 km) and older (15 km) Canadians.
- On average, men (19 km) have a longer commute than women (17 km).
- Canadians living in rural areas (20 km) have a longer average commute than those living in urban settings (18 km).
- Canadians earning over \$60K per year (20 km) have a longer commute than those earning between \$30K and \$60K per year (19 km) and those earning below \$30K per year (10 km).

## ***Rising Gas Prices are Forcing Many to Change their Commuting Habits...***

Four in ten (37%) commuters say that in the last six months, the rising price of gas has meant that they are now walking to work more often than before, while some have made other changes to their commuting habits such as using a more gas-efficient car (31%), carpooling (24%), using public transit more often (19%), working from home more often (14%), or even moving closer to work (9%). Nearly one half (47%) of commuters have not made any changes to their commuting habits, but are dealing with the rising price of gas in another manner – cutting back on other expenses to pay for the rising price of commuting to work.

- Walking to work more often (37%):
  - Canadians living in Quebec and Atlantic Canada (43%) are slightly more likely than residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba (39%), Ontario (36%), Alberta (31%), and British Columbia (30%) to walk to work more often now.

- Younger Canadians (43%) are more likely than middle-aged (31%) or older (36%) Canadians to walk to work more often.
- Canadians living in an urban setting (40%) are more likely to be walking to work more often than are those living in rural areas (27%).
- Using a more gas-efficient car (31%):
  - Quebecers (41%) are most likely to have switched to using a more gas-efficient car in the last six months, followed by residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba (30%), Ontario (28%), Atlantic Canada (27%), British Columbia (26%), and Alberta (25%).
  - Canadians aged 18 to 54 (32%) are more likely than those over the age of 54 (22%) to have done the same.
  - Women (35%) are more likely than men (27%) to have switched to a more gas-efficient car.
- Carpooling (24%):
  - Residents of Atlantic Canada (33%) are most likely to have been carpooling more frequently over the last six months, followed by those living in British Columbia (25%), Ontario (25%), Quebec (25%), Alberta (15%), and Saskatchewan and Manitoba (9%).
  - Younger Canadians (29%) are more likely than middle-aged (22%) or older (15%) Canadians to have done the same.

- Using public transit more often (19%):
  - Residents of Quebec (23%) are most likely to have been using public transit more often in the last six months, followed by those living in Ontario (20%), British Columbia (18%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (16%), Alberta (13%), and Atlantic Canada (10%).
  - Younger Canadians (26%) are more likely than middle-aged (13%) or older (19%) Canadians to be using public transit more often.
  - Canadians living in urban settings (23%) are more likely than those who live in rural areas (5%) to have done the same.
- Working from home more often (14%):
  - Residents of Atlantic Canada (20%) are most likely to have been working from home more often over the last six months, followed by those living in Alberta (18%), Quebec (15%), Ontario (13%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (12%), and British Columbia (7%).
  - Middle-aged Canadians (16%) are more likely to have been working from home more often than older (13%) and younger (12%) Canadians.
- Moved to a home closer to work (9%):
  - Canadians living in Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia (10%) are most likely to have moved to a home closer to work in the last six months, followed by residents of Atlantic Canada (8%), Alberta (5%), and Saskatchewan and Manitoba (4%).

- Younger Canadians (12%) are more likely than middle-aged (8%) or older (6%) Canadians to have done this.

## ***Many Are Likely to Change their Commuting Habits Going Forward...***

A majority (52%) of commuters say they are likely (30% 'very', 22% 'somewhat') to walk to work more often; one half (49%) say they are likely (29% 'very', 20% 'somewhat') to switch to a more gas-efficient car. Four in ten (39%) believe they're likely (17% 'very', 22% 'somewhat') to carpool going forward, while three in ten (27%) commuters say they're likely (15% 'very', 12% 'somewhat') to use public transit more often, and two in ten (19%) are likely (9% 'very', 9% 'somewhat') to work from home more often. A good deal (14%) of commuters indicate that they are likely (8% 'very', 6% 'somewhat') to move to a home closer to work, while six in ten (58%) Canadians are likely (33% 'very', 25% 'somewhat') to cut back on other expenses going forward to pay for the rising price of getting to work.

- Walking more often:
  - Residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba (63%) are most likely to say they're likely to walk to work more often in the future, followed by those living in Quebec (56%), Atlantic Canada (56%), British Columbia (52%), Ontario (49%), and Alberta (44%).
  - Younger Canadians (61%) are more likely than middle-aged (45%) or older (48%) Canadians to say the same.
  - Women (54%) are more likely than men (50%) to indicate that they would be likely to walk to work more often in the future.

- Switch to a more gas-efficient car:
  - Residents of Quebec (59%) are most likely to say they would be likely to switch to a more gas-efficient car, followed by those living in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (57%), British Columbia (48%), Alberta (48%), Atlantic Canada (46%), and Ontario (43%).
  - Middle-aged Canadians (52%) are more likely than younger (47%) and older (43%) Canadians to say the same.
- Carpooling:
  - Canadians living in Atlantic Canada (45%) are most likely to say they would be likely to carpool more often in the future, followed by residents of Ontario (42%), British Columbia (38%), Quebec (35%), Alberta (34%), and Saskatchewan and Manitoba (29%).
  - Younger Canadians (46%) would be most likely to carpool, compared to middle-aged Canadians (39%) and older Canadians (22%).
- Using public transit more often:
  - Residents of Ontario and Quebec (30%) would be most likely to use public transit more often in the future, followed by those living in British Columbia (25%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (24%), Atlantic Canada (21%), and Alberta (19%).
  - Younger Canadians (36%) would be more likely than middle-aged (22%) and older (23%) Canadians to say the same.



- Working from home more often:
  - Residents of Atlantic Canada (23%) would be most likely to work from home more often, followed by those living in Alberta (21%), Quebec (20%), Ontario (18%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (18%), and British Columbia (14%).
  - Middle-aged Canadians (23%) would be more likely than older (16%) and younger (14%) Canadians to do the same.
- Moving to a home closer to work:
  - Residents of Atlantic Canada (23%) would be most likely to move to a home closer to work, followed by those living in Alberta (19%), British Columbia (14%), Quebec (14%), and Ontario (11%). Residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba (0%) would most likely not move closer to work.
  - Canadians aged 18 to 34 (18%) are more likely than those over the age of 34 (11%) to move closer to work.

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