

What Gas Shortage

Vacationers Told Not To Worry

Michiganians scheduling summer automobile vacation trips should proceed with their plans and not worry about possible gasoline shortages in this state or elsewhere, according to Automobile Club of Michigan.

"We are not advising motorists to cancel any automobile travel plans because of the grim warnings of impending summer fuel shortages," explains Joseph L. Ratke, Auto Club touring manager.

"While the midwest is supposed to be one of the tightest gasoline-supply areas in the nation, we have yet to hear from the first motorist stranded because he could not purchase fuel," Ratke states.

"The most severe condition we have heard about is the self-imposed rationing system that some stations are using to stretch allocated gas."

Auto Club—which is cooperating in a nation-wide weekly AAA "fuel gauge" survey—points out there are spot shortages developing across the nation, but motorists still are able to buy all the gasoline necessary for travel.

AAA "fuel gauge" reports throughout the country tend to confirm a current broad availability of gasoline for motorists. The reports are being made available by

AAA on a weekly basis to let motorists know those travel destinations where tight or short supplies of gasoline may develop.

The most recent AAA "fuel gauge" survey of 1,400 gas stations showed 75 per cent operating normally, 24 per cent limiting hours of operation and only one per cent closed because of tight fuel conditions.

Auto Club's survey recently noted the first spot shortages of gasoline at major brand dealers in some areas of Michigan—most noticeably the southeast, where 50 per cent of the stations checked are curtailing hours

of operation somewhat in June.

"So far, the scare of a potential gasoline shortage has not kept motorists at home," says Ratke. "Requests for all gas travel counters are up five per cent, with a 12 per cent rise in Michigan routings."

Gasoline seems to be more plentiful in resort areas like Mackinaw City, Oscoda and Traverse City than in metropolitan areas like Detroit, according to Ratke.

Even the Upper Peninsula has adequate gasoline, and checks at Marquette, Ironwood, St. Ignace and Sault Ste. Marie show most major brand stations are remaining open with normal operations.

The Michigan gas survey shows four out of five major brand stations are continuing with normal operations, with the remainder taking minor steps to conserve fuel such as closing earlier than normal during the week and on Sunday.

Auto Club's survey does point out that many stations now having the amount of gasoline they are able to sell allocated to them by distributors. Most of the stations on an allocation system are able to obtain the amount of gas delivered to them each month during the

previous year.

"With travel up five per cent, new cars burning more fuel because of pollution control equipment and added accessories such as air conditioning, the demand for fuel across the state has risen seven per cent this year over last," states Ratke.

This means that stations which have supplies allocated are taking steps to make gas stretch. Some are cutting back the number of hours open each day, some are reducing the number of days open each week and a very few are limiting the number of gallons sold per customer.

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