

# Gas Back Up Over \$4.20 Per Gallon in Massachusetts

Michael P. Norton

State House News Service

Gas prices in Massachusetts crept higher in recent days as the wait continues for some kind of tax relief plan from the state Legislature. House and Senate Democrats have nixed gas tax relief proposals but have continued to suggest that tax relief of some sort may be in the cards this spring as the state continues to bask in revenue surpluses.

AAA Massachusetts on Monday said that the average price of a gallon of gas rose 8 cents over the last week, to hit \$4.21 per gallon. It's one cent higher than a month ago and up \$1.42 a gallon over this time last year. The automobile organization blamed high crude oil prices and tight supplies.

"As long as the supply remains tight, it will be hard for crude oil prices to fall and consumers will in turn face higher prices at the pump," AAA's Mary Maguire said. "It now costs drivers in the U.S. about \$23 more to fill up than a year ago."

Remote work has trimmed driving expenses for some people while other motorists and businesses who must use their vehicles have had to dig deeper to keep up with their fixed costs. As warmer weather moves in, higher gas prices will become a consideration for anyone contemplating local or regional day trips or weekends away. As gas prices and inflation cut into household budgets, Gov. Charlie Baker has argued the state can afford a multi-faceted \$700 million tax relief proposal. Legislative Democrats have so far turned the governor down but suggested they remain open to unspecified tax relief ideas, including those to help lower income residents.