



PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Fuel Prices



GARY HATT

“ You would have to live in a cave to not notice that fuel prices have been increasing over the past few months. What is causing the recent hike in prices? You know what they say, opinions are like elbows, everyone has one. That is not the discussion of this article. Here we will talk about how it may affect you as a Bus Nut.

As of this writing, the average price of diesel in the U.S. is \$5.08 per gallon. Of course, if you are lucky enough to live in California, you will pay at least \$1 per gallon more.

Back in 1998, when fuel prices were less than \$1.00 per gallon, we didn't think much about buying fuel. We simply filled our tank(s) and went on our merry way even though at that time, many people were freaking out as the price of fuel went over \$1.00 per gallon. Oh, my!

With the price of fuel a bit higher now, it costs more to travel in a bus conversion, and many people consider the price of fuel one of the main expenses when traveling in a bus. However, when you compare living in a bus conversion to owning or renting a home, then the cost is not so bad.

After all, in a bus conversion, you do not have a mortgage or rent payment or the direct cost of electricity, sewer, and trash pickup that you pay monthly as in a house, and you have no lawn to mow. Also, the cost of rentals is increasing by over 30% in some cities this year, pricing many people out of the market. When you compare the average cost of living in a bus, even with the higher price of fuel, you are still able to

save more money living in a bus than in a house.

If you stay at campgrounds frequently, then you will usually pay much more for camping than you would for fuel in any month, and campground fees have also increased significantly. You also have to buy food, and maybe pay for a good internet connection. Almost everyone has an internet connection and cell phone now.

You have to eat, and stay connected. These are fixed costs. In reality, even fixed costs can be reduced. Do you really need to have 300 channels on your Dish satellite antenna? Maybe it is time to cut back on some of these not-so-fixed costs.

The cost of fuel and repairs is variable. They are directly proportional to how many miles you drive. Can you travel less? Probably. Maybe you can find a nice spot to park in a national park or BLM land for less money and stay there for a while.

Maybe you can stay on friend's land and help them with some of their projects in exchange for a place to stay and maybe even hookups. A lot of people can use some extra help around the house or farm. It doesn't hurt to ask. This could be a win/win.

Maybe it is time to just say put for a while. I estimate that with fuel, oil, filter changes, tires, general maintenance, and repairs, it costs me about \$2.00 per mile to travel in my bus now. So, by traveling less it is like putting money in the bank. I like to travel, but this summer I plan to stay stationary more than last year and wait to see what happens with fuel prices.

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