

11/1/2012

MEMORANDUM FOR Chad Whiteman
Policy Analyst
Office of Management and Budget

FROM: Adam Sieminski
Administrator
U.S. Energy Information Administration

SUBJECT: Estimating Vehicle Fuel Supply in the New York Metropolitan Area.

The Energy Information Administration (EIA) requests that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approve a non-substantive change to the existing approved collection with OMB control number 1905-0174 for modification in collection frequency, and the addition of two questions for Form EIA-878, "Motor Gasoline Price Survey" to assess vehicle fuel supply conditions from the damage from Hurricane Sandy. This hurricane struck the U.S. East Coast on Monday October 29, 2012. The weekly survey uses a sample to generate statistical estimates. There are 800 respondents in the EIA-878 sample, but this request would affect only the 30 respondents in the New York Metropolitan Area.

Respondents

Selected retailers of fuel would consist of those currently in the sample that are located in the New York Metropolitan Area.

Frequency of Survey Submissions

Data collection would begin on November 2, 2012, and would be conducted daily for up to twenty days. Data collection would be primarily by telephone or electronic mail. The data would be collected from the retailers in the affected area until they are operating at normal levels. On or before November 16, 2012, EIA would reassess fuel supply disruptions caused by Hurricane Sandy and determine if it is necessary to collect data for an additional period of time and send a supplemental request to OMB. If EIA finds that less frequent data collection satisfies the need for information about the recovery of fuel retailers, we would reduce the frequency of data collection.

There is precedent for conducting this survey on a daily basis during emergency periods. The EIA-878 survey provided daily estimates from April 29, 1996, through August 2, 1996, to Congress, Federal officials, and the transportation industry in order to monitor rapid price increases at both regional and national levels. During the 1991 Iraq war, the data were used by Congress and Federal officials to monitor the retail price of

gasoline on a daily basis. The New York State Energy Research Development Authority uses the EIA-878 retail gasoline price estimates for New York State to monitor supply conditions and price levels in the State.

Burden

The total additional burden is estimated to be 30 hours, i.e., .05 hours per retailer times 20 days times 30 retailers. The estimated total additional cost to respondents for the burden hours is estimated to be \$2,032 dollars, i.e., 30 hours times \$67.74 per hour (The average loaded salary plus benefits for an EIA employee is \$67.74 per hour). In fact, the actual burden to respondents may be less, because no data collection is necessary once supplies have stabilized to normal levels in the region.

Table 1.

Number of Retailers	Burden Hours	Frequency	Duration	Total Burden Hours
30	.05	Daily	20 Days	30

This request reflects an absolute change of 30 burden hours.

Modification of Collection

The collections would consist of the existing questions already cleared and an additional two multi-part questions:

1. Currently, does your station have any gasoline available for customers to purchase?

- a. Yes [Go to 1a]
- b. No [Go to 1c]

1a. Do you think your station will have gasoline available for customers to purchase during the next 24 hours?

- a. Yes [Go to 2]
- b. No [Go to 1b]

1b. Why don't you think your station will have gasoline available for customers to purchase during the next 24 hours?

- a. [Open ended] [Potential Prompts: Loss of electricity, run out of gasoline for customers to purchase, other] [Go to 2]

1c. Why doesn't your station have any gasoline available for customers to purchase?

- a. [Open ended] [Potential Prompts: No gasoline to sell, no electricity, damage to pumping equipment/station, other] [Go to 1d]

1d. What day do you think your station will have gasoline available for customers to purchase?

- a. [specific date, estimate okay] [Go to 2]

2. Currently, does your station have any diesel available for customers to purchase?

- a. Yes [Go to 2a]
- b. No [Go to 2c]

2a. Do you think your station will have diesel available for customers to purchase during the next 24 hours?

- a. Yes [Go to 3]
- b. No [Go to 2b]

2b. Why don't you think your station will have diesel available for customers to purchase during the next 24 hours?

- a. [Open ended] [Potential Prompts: Loss of electricity, run out of diesel for customers to purchase, other] [Go to 3]

2c. Why doesn't your station have any diesel available for customers to purchase?

- a. [Open ended] [Potential Prompts: No diesel to sell, no electricity, damage to pumping equipment/station, other] [Go to 2d]

2d. What day do you think your station will have diesel available for customers to purchase?

- a. [specific date, estimate okay] [Go to 3]

We do not anticipate that these questions would significantly add to the respondent burden because the requested information is consistent with the record keeping practices of the respondents and can easily be retrieved from their existing records; therefore we would continue to use the 0.05 hour estimate.

Provisions for Confidentiality of Information

The information reported on Forms EIA-878 is currently protected as confidential in accordance with the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (CIPSEA) and used solely for statistical purposes. EIA would protect the additional information collected under CIPSEA and would protect the identifiability of the respondents in any public release of information.

Publication

Upon receipt of the data from the EIA-878 EIA would publish the aggregate statistics. The Secretary of Energy routinely uses EIA-878 data to monitor regional price levels and relies on the data in his reports to the Congress and the White House. EIA would conduct this collection to better inform the government as it relates to vehicle fuel supply conditions as an outgrowth of the damage from Hurricane Sandy.