



Alaska Fuel Price Report: Summer 2022

DCRA Mapping, Analytics, and Data Resources Section

September 2, 2022

The Alaska Fuel Price Report was originally created in 2005 to inform former Governor Frank Murkowski's administration about actual energy costs across Alaska. These data were used to inform decision making relating to grant and loan programs administered by the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development.

Since the initial report in 2005, the Division of Community and Regional Affairs (DCRA) has conducted 34 surveys to obtain heating fuel and gasoline prices from 100 selected Alaskan communities. The survey data continue to be used by public and private entities as a consistent frame of reference over time.

This report provides summary information about current fuel prices across Alaska, comparisons of historical fuel prices in the surveyed

communities versus the national average, and interactive maps that contain both current and historical fuel price data.

All reported prices are "point in time" as reported by local fuel vendors, community contacts, and the corporate offices of major Alaskan retailers. Survey calls for the Summer 2022 survey were placed between July 11, 2022 and August 24, 2022. All prices include applicable local taxes.

In some cases, communities were about to receive an annual fuel delivery. The decision was made to wait for these communities to receive their summer fuel shipment and update local retail fuel prices instead of recording the price at the time of initial contact.



Circumstances Surrounding the Summer 2022 Survey

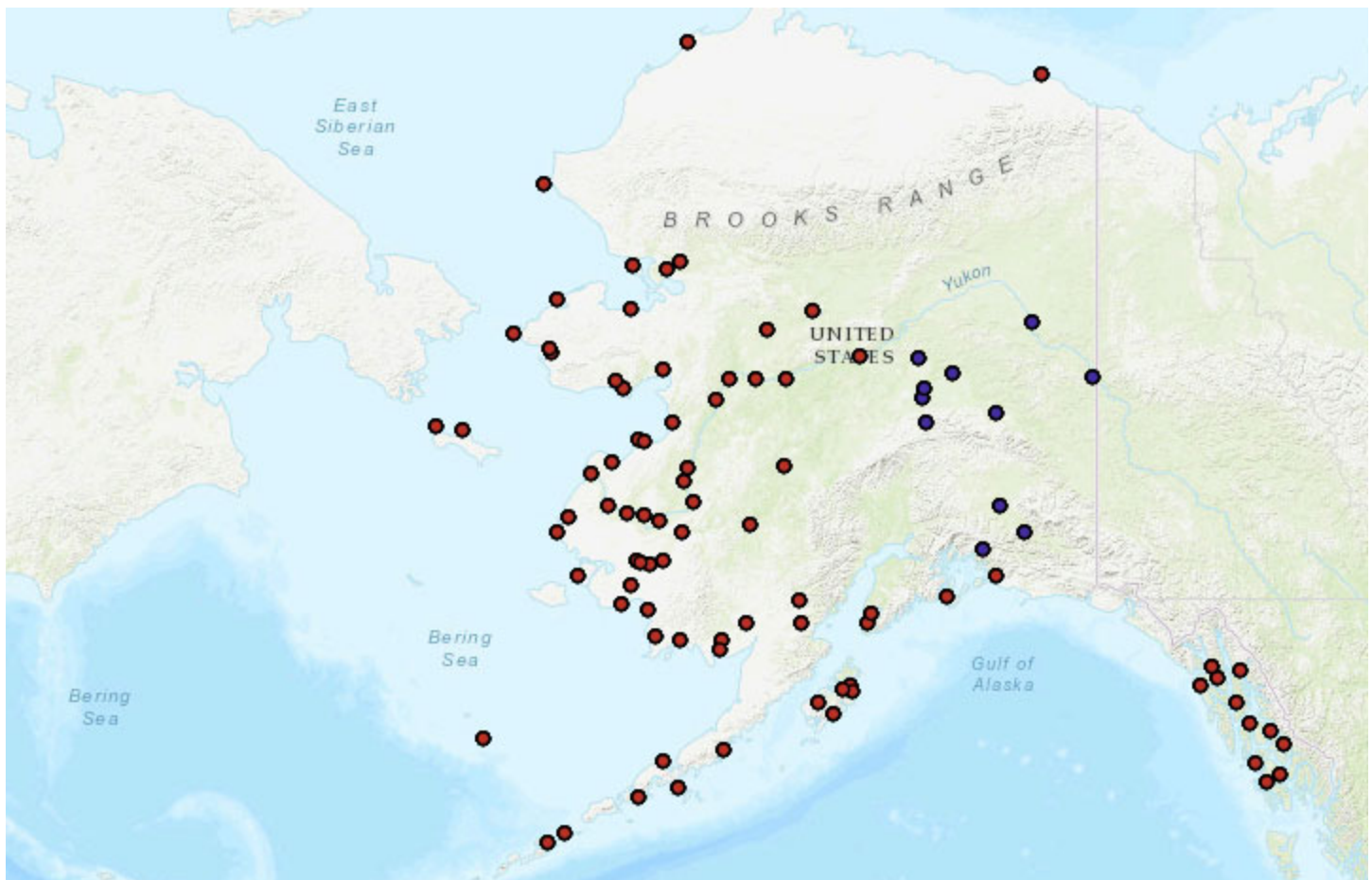
From March 17, 2022 to September 6, 2022, the price of Alaska North Slope crude (ANS) continuously exceeded \$98.00 per barrel.

On June 8, 2022, ANS prices reached a peak of \$127.77. While not a perfect analogue, high crude oil prices largely reflect higher consumer prices for heating fuel, gasoline, and other petroleum products.

This is not the first time that ANS has exceeded \$98.00 per barrel for an extended period. Other such periods include:

- February 22, 2008 to September 12, 2008 (Peak: \$144.59)
- February 22, 2011 to June 19, 2012 (Peak: \$127.99)
- June 29, 2012 to August 29, 2014 (Peak: \$116.50)

Against this backdrop of high crude oil prices, DCRA has received inquiries about how consumer fuel prices are impacted. This report and the historical data files of heating fuel and gasoline prices provide information to help address these, and other, inquiries.



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About Fuel Transportation in Alaska

Most communities in Alaska receive heating fuel and gasoline by barge or via the road system; however, some communities receive fuel by air cargo, local refineries, or seasonal ice roads.

Communities on the road system or those near local refineries receive regular fuel shipments and have access to less expensive and more reliable deliveries than other parts of the state.

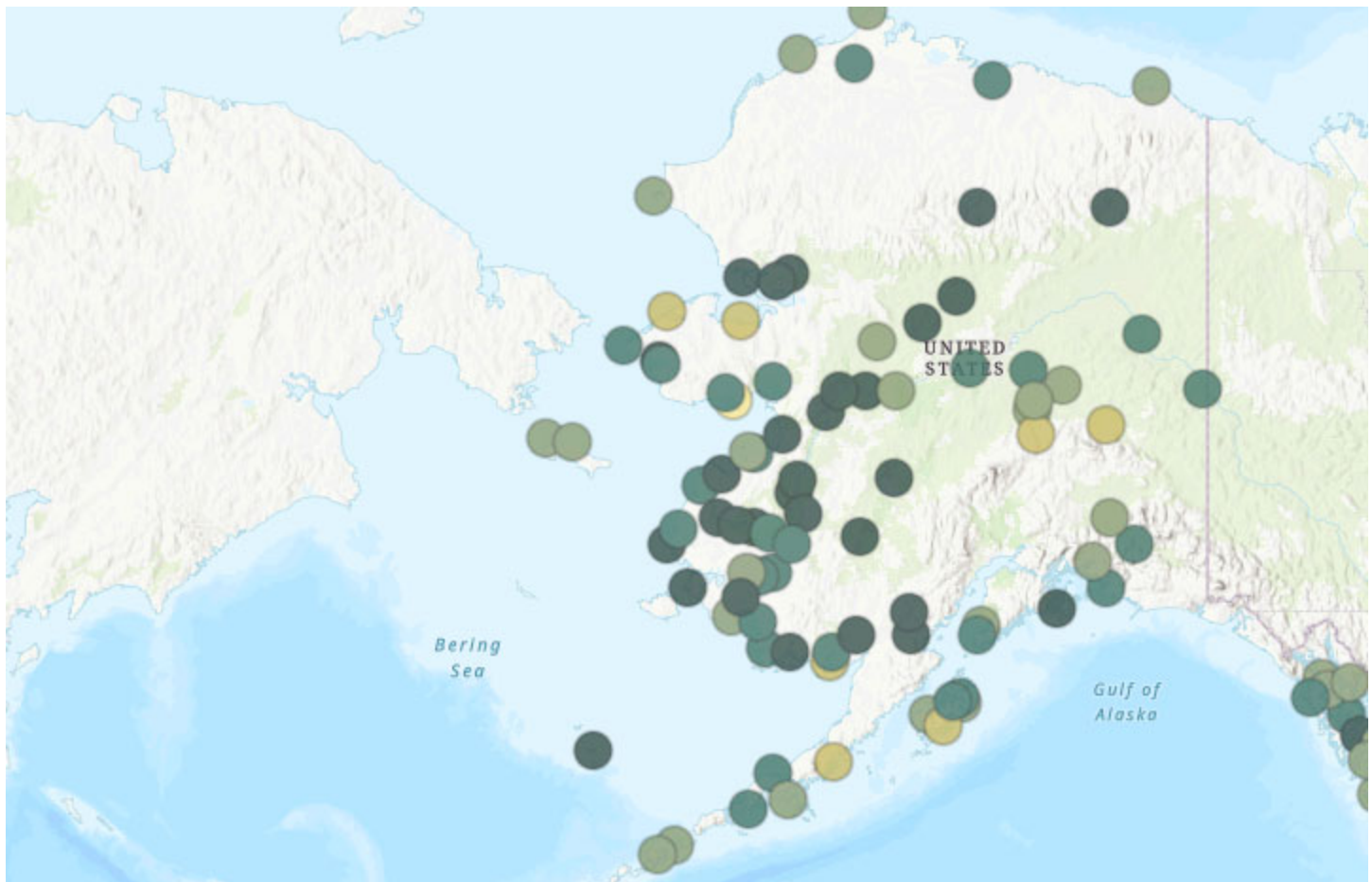
Southeast and Gulf Coast communities are generally able to receive fuel barges or chartered boats year round. Most of these communities will have gasoline and heating fuel prices that rise and fall throughout the year.

Coastal communities in western Alaska and communities along Alaska's major river systems have a shorter window in which to receive fuel. Rough waters, ice buildup, and shallow river depths limit when fuel barges can make deliveries. Specialized barges are required to deliver fuel to river communities where docking facilities are underdeveloped or nonexistent and rivers can be shallow. Longer shipping distances and unique shipping solutions add to the overall cost of fuel delivery.

Communities in these areas have a large fuel delivery in the summer, and possibly a small top-off delivery shortly before the rivers and ports freeze over. Because of the limited delivery schedule, prices in these communities often remain fixed for a full year until the arrival of the next barge.

Communities that are not on the road system and not located near the coast or a major river rely on air service for fuel delivery. As these communities are usually rural, remote communities, delivery volumes are limited. Retail prices in these communities reflect the inefficiencies involved in shipping fuel via general aviation.

Researchers: DCRA's Community Database Online has data about [fuel transportation methods](#) for download.



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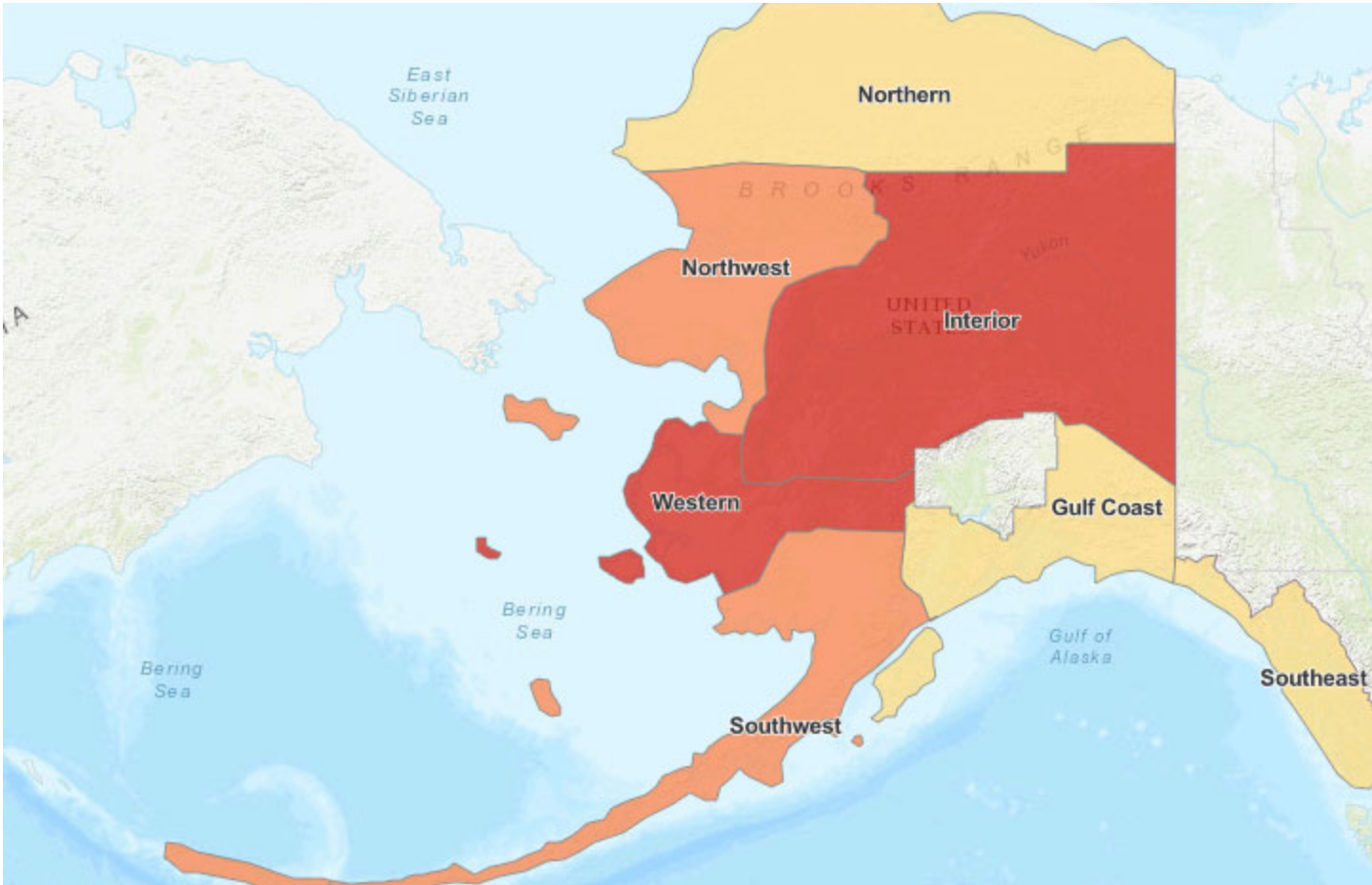
Gasoline Pricing in Alaskan Communities

The average retail price of unleaded gasoline in the 100 surveyed communities in Summer 2022 was \$6.73 per gallon, which is 27 percent higher than the reported Winter 2022 price of \$5.31 per gallon. The national average on July 18, 2022 was \$4.35 per gallon.

Notably, the \$6.73 per gallon price in the surveyed communities in Summer 2022 is eight percent higher than the previously highest average of \$6.23 per gallon reported in Summer 2014.

The map to the right includes the price per gallon in each of the responsive surveyed communities, as reported in the Summer 2022 survey.

Researchers: National average price is from the July 18, 2022 report from the [U.S. Energy Information Administration](#).



Gasoline Price Average by Region

Among the responsive surveyed communities, the Southeast region had the lowest average gasoline price at \$5.99 per gallon. The Interior region had the highest average gasoline price at \$7.60 per gallon.

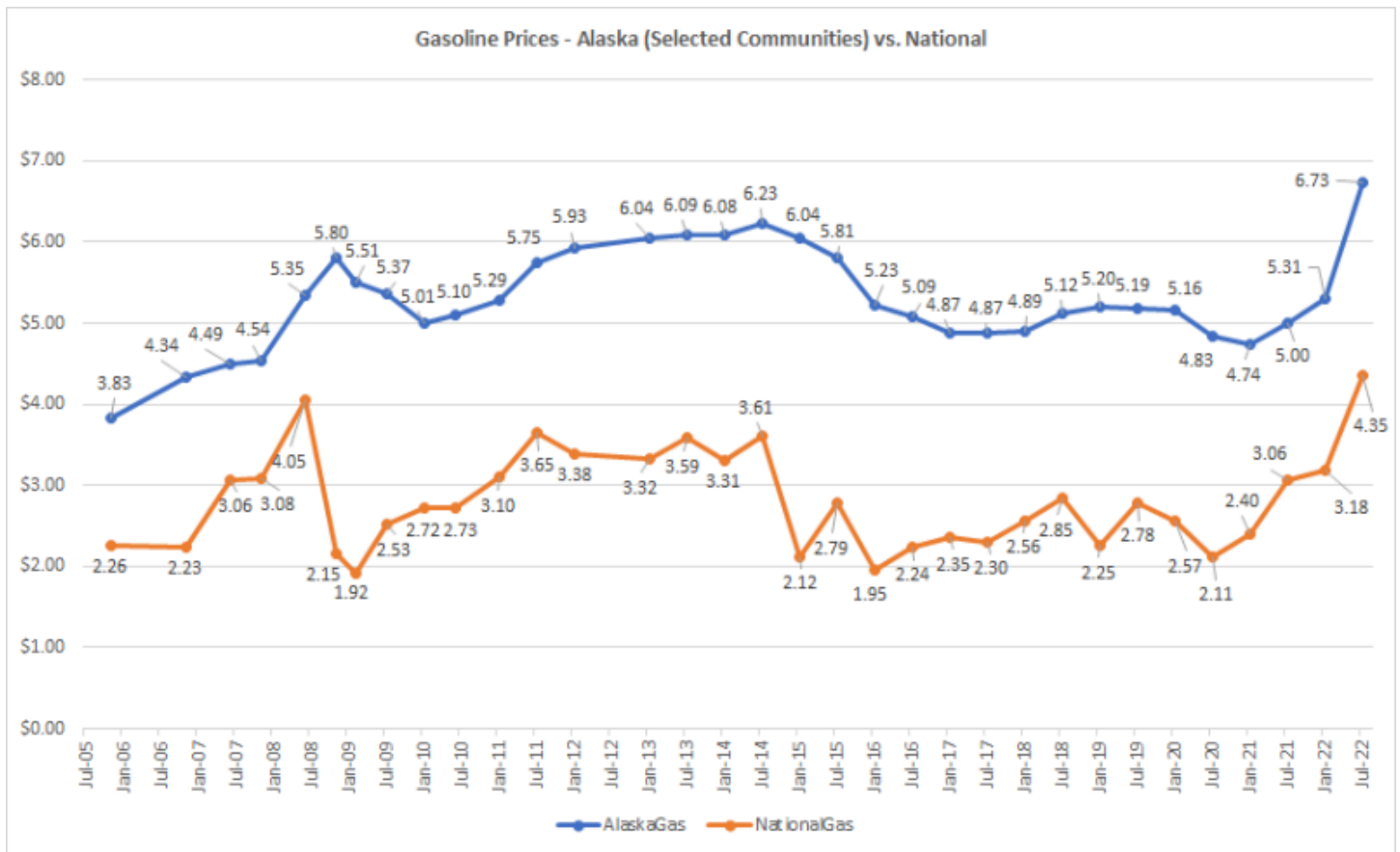
The Northwest region featured the two communities with the lowest retail price per gallon (Golovin: \$4.00, Shishmaref: \$4.43). The contact in Golovin indicated that prices would increase after the fuel from their 2021 shipment was fully consumed.

The Interior region has the four communities with the highest retail price per gallon for gasoline (Hughes: \$14:00, Alatna: \$11.50, Arctic Village: \$10.00, Galena: \$9.79). All four of these communities are off the road system.

Region	Average
Gulf Coast	\$6.02

Interior	\$7.60
Northern	\$6.29
Northwest	\$6.43
Southeast	\$5.99
Southwest	\$6.61
Western	\$7.16

Note: Because national fuel surveys in 2005 included Southcentral Alaska only, the DCRA fuel survey was intentionally designed to report on fuel prices in unreported regions of Alaska. For this reason, the DCRA survey does not report on prices in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region.



Comparison of Gasoline Prices vs. National Average: 2005 to Present

Average gasoline prices for the 100 surveyed communities have generally been between \$2.00 and \$3.00 per gallon higher than the national average. Comparing the survey results to the national

average price of regular unleaded gasoline on July 18, 2022, the gap in Summer 2022 was \$2.38 per gallon.

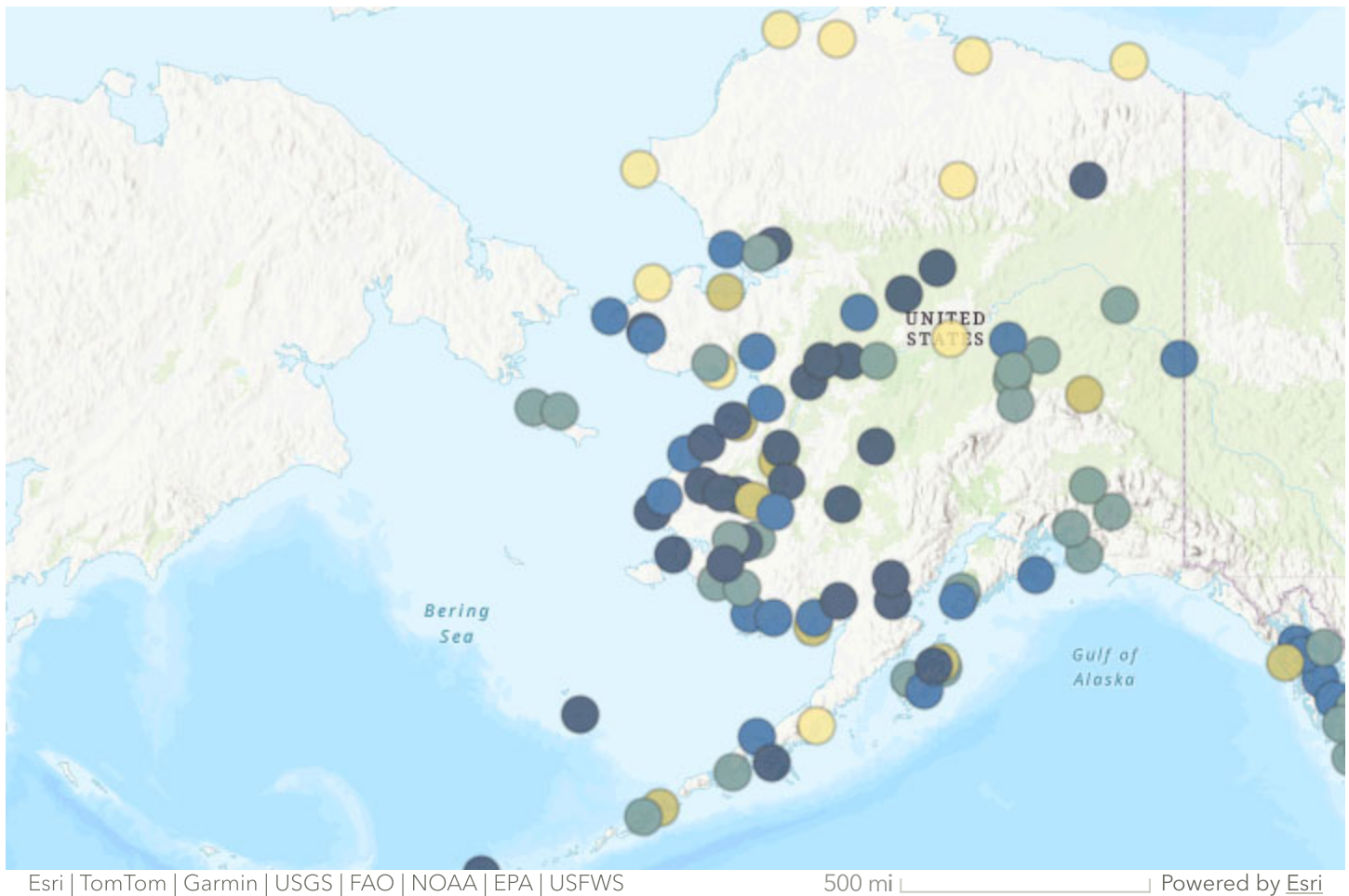
In western regions and river communities of Alaska, communities are locked into the prior summer's prices even when winter prices drop

significantly elsewhere. These gaps were exaggerated in winters when a summer spike in the price per barrel of Alaska North Slope Crude was followed by a winter crash, such as those in 2009 and 2015:

- \$133.78 in June 2008 vs. \$39.01 in January 2009
- \$114.47 in July 2014 vs. \$48.84 in January 2015

In the Winter 2009 and Winter 2015 surveys, gasoline prices were between \$3.50 and \$4.00 per gallon higher in the surveyed communities - nearly triple the national average (\$5.51 vs. \$1.92 and \$6.04 vs. \$2.12, respectively).

Researchers: The national unleaded gasoline average is tracked by the [US Energy Information Administration](#).



Heating Fuel Prices in Alaskan Communities

In Summer 2022, the average retail heating fuel price per gallon for the 93 unsubsidized communities was \$6.62[#]. This is 26 percent higher than the reported winter average of \$5.03 per gallon. The last reported national average price of heating fuel was \$5.13 per gallon.

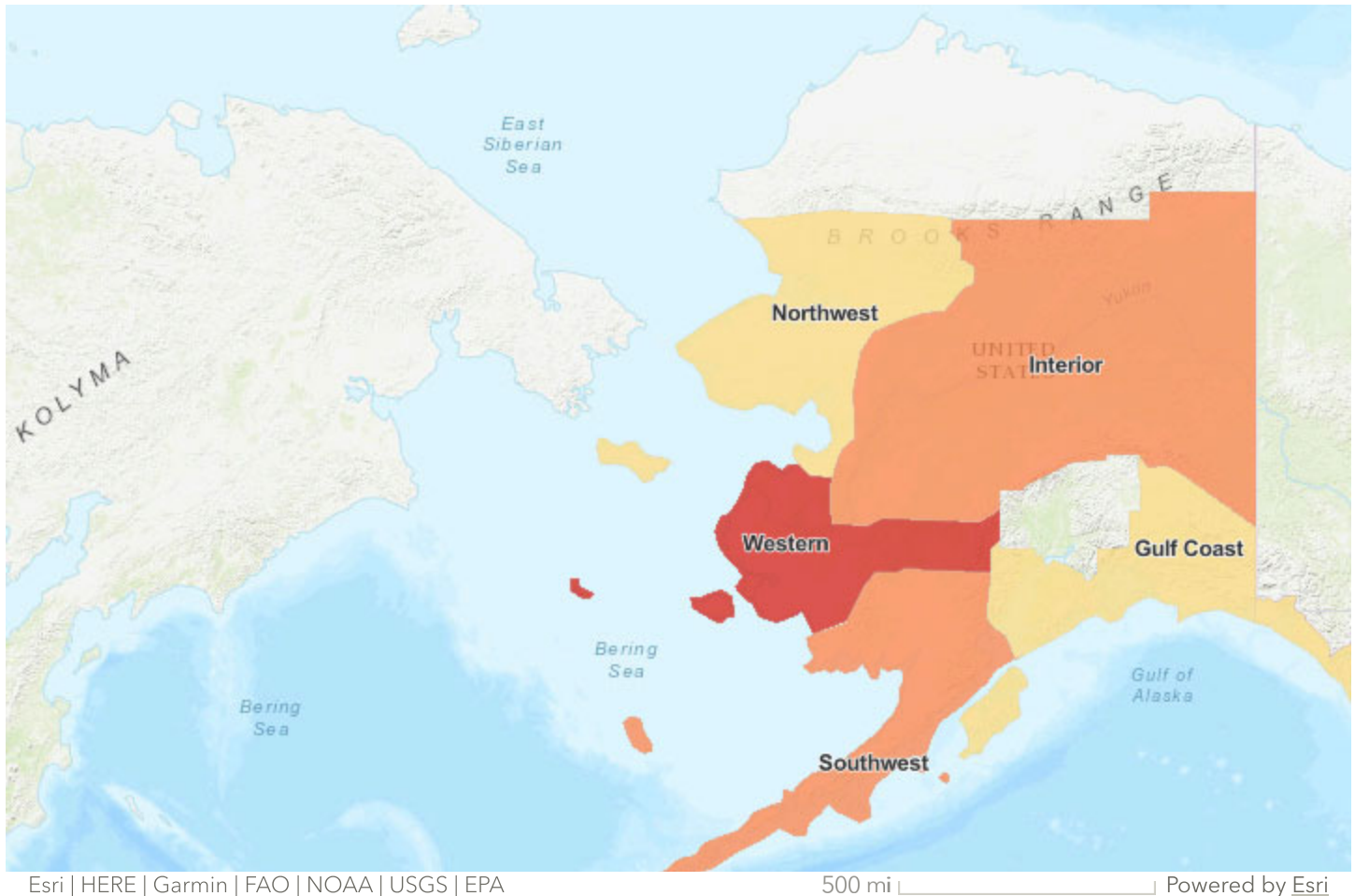
Notably, the \$6.62[#] per gallon price in Summer 2022 is thirteen percent higher than the previous highs of \$5.86 in Winter 2013 and \$5.85 in the supplemental Fall 2008 collection.

The map to the right includes the price per gallon for heating fuel in each of the surveyed communities as reported in the Summer 2022 survey.

Note: All North Slope communities are excluded from the statewide average, as the cost of heating fuel is subsidized by the North Slope Borough.

Researchers: National average price is from the March 28, 2022 report from the [U.S. Energy Information Administration \(EIA\)](#). EIA only reports retail heating fuel prices during the "winter heating season" from October through March, as per its [FAQ](#).

The initial release of this report indicated an average per gallon price of \$6.33 per gallon; however, this price included the subsidized communities of the North Slope Borough. This error was corrected and a revised version of this report published on February 23, 2023.



Heating Fuel Price Average by Region

Among the surveyed communities, the Northwest region had the least expensive average heating fuel price at \$5.95 per gallon, followed closely by the Southeast region (\$5.97) and the Gulf Coast region (\$5.98). The Western region had the most expensive average heating fuel price at \$7.44 per gallon.

The community with the lowest retail price for heating fuel was the Interior community of Tanana at \$3.25 per gallon.

The highest heating fuel price per gallon was reported in the Western community of Sleetmute (\$17.00), the only community that reports selling Jet-A fuel for home heating. The next highest are the Interior communities of Hughes (\$13.00) and Arctic Village (\$12.00). Notably, Arctic Village only sells heating fuel to the city utility building as residences have converted to biomass for heating.

Region	Average
Gulf Coast	\$5.98
Interior	\$7.04
Northwest	\$5.95
Southeast	\$5.97
Southwest	\$6.74
Western	\$7.44

Note: Because national fuel surveys in 2005 included Southcentral Alaska only, the DCRA fuel survey was intentionally designed to report on fuel prices in unreported regions of Alaska. For this reason, the DCRA survey does not report on prices in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region.



About Heating Fuel Pricing in the North Slope

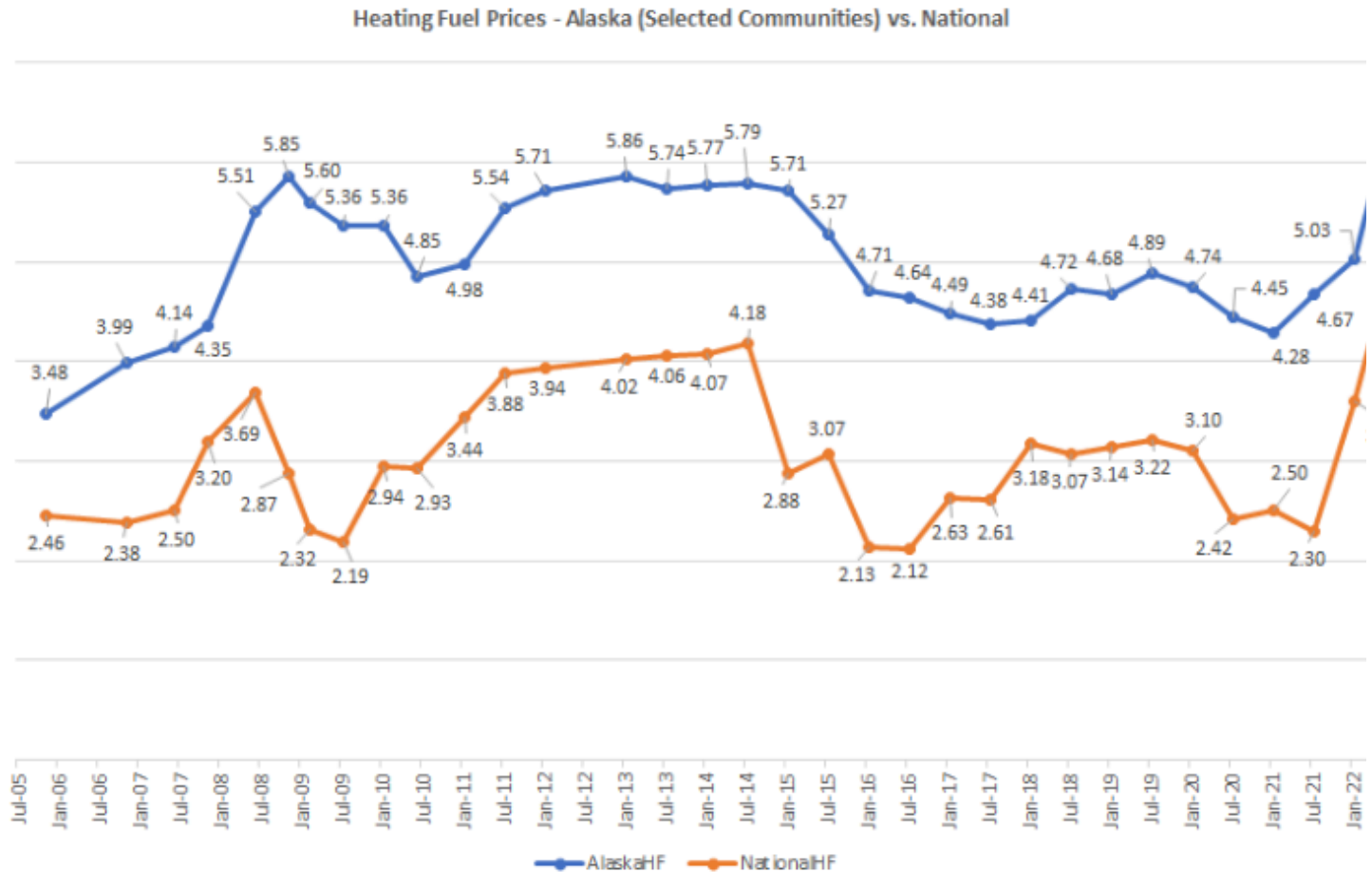
Residential heating fuel in the North Slope is subsidized by the North Slope Borough. This subsidy is not extended to commercial businesses. The commercial heating fuel price in North Slope communities is routinely 2 to 6 times higher than the residential price.

Because residential heating fuel costs are subsidized in this region, North Slope communities are not factored into the average heating fuel price of DCRA's surveyed communities.

Community	Residential	Commercial
Anaktuvuk Pass	\$1.50	\$8.17
Atqasuk	\$1.50	\$6.50
Kaktovik	\$2.50	\$6.00
Nuiqsut	\$1.50	\$6.57
Point Hope	\$2.10	\$7.25

Utqiagvik	n/a	n/a
Wainwright	\$1.05	\$7.30

Note: Heating fuel is not sold in Utqiagvik, where homes are heated with natural gas.



Comparison of Heating Fuel Prices vs. National Average: 2005 to Present

Average heating fuel prices in the surveyed communities have generally ranged between \$1.00 and \$2.00 per gallon higher than the national average. In Summer 2022, there was a difference of \$1.49[#] per gallon between the surveyed, unsubsidized communities and the March 28, 2022, national average.

In western regions and river communities of Alaska, communities are locked into the prior summer's prices even when winter prices drop significantly elsewhere. These gaps were exaggerated in winters when a summer spike in the price per barrel of Alaska North

Slope Crude was followed by a winter crash, such as those in 2009 and 2015:

- \$133.78 in June 2008 vs. \$39.01 in January 2009
- \$114.47 in July 2014 vs. \$48.87 in January 2015

In the Winter 2009 survey, heating fuel prices were \$3.28 per gallon higher in the surveyed communities (\$5.60 vs. \$2.32). In the Winter 2015 survey, heating fuel prices were \$2.83 per gallon higher (\$5.71 vs. \$2.88).

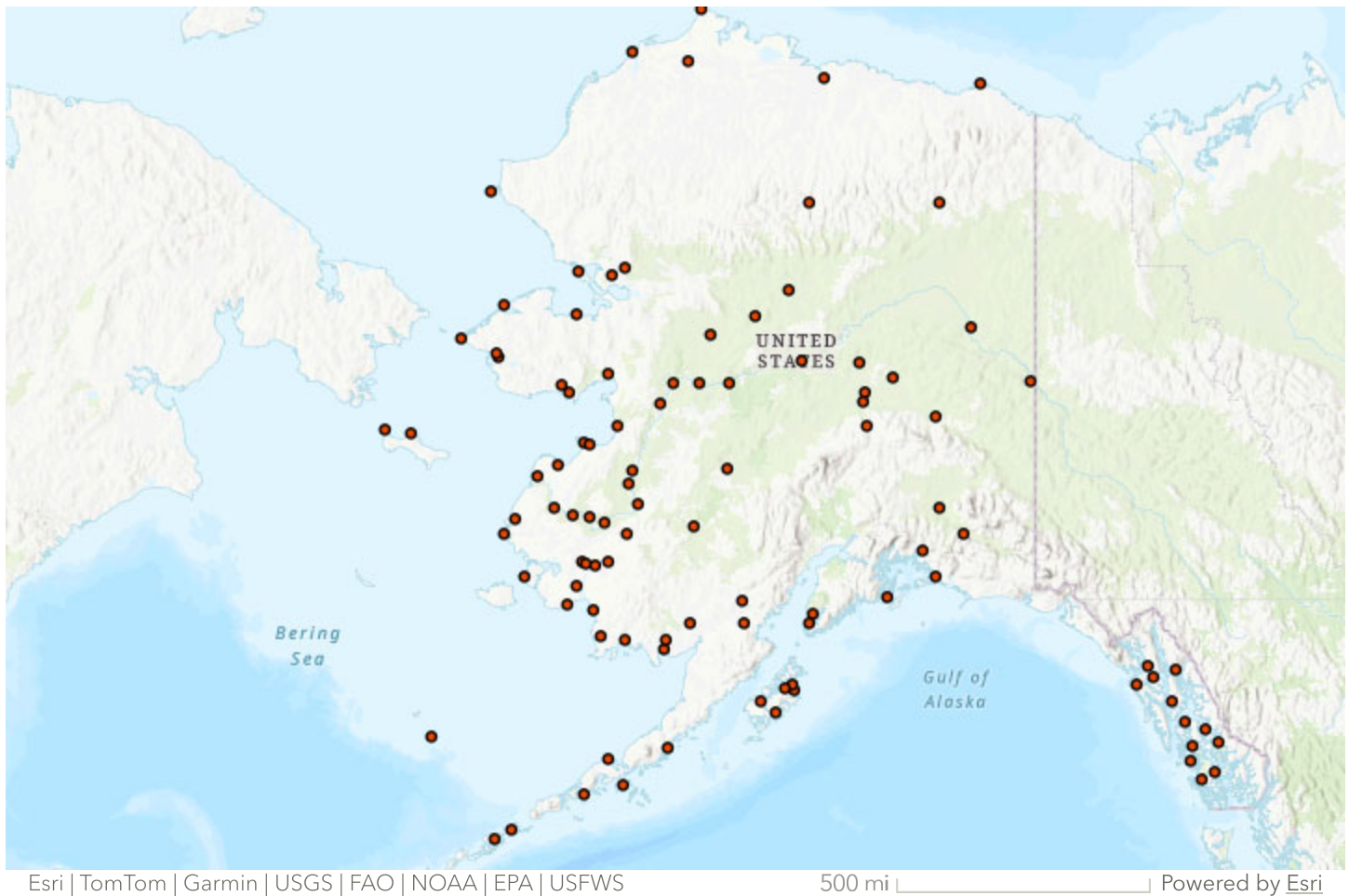
Due to the unpredictable nature of crude prices, speculation cannot be made as to whether prices will drop precipitously, as in the winters of 2009 and 2015, or remain stable, as happened in the winters of 2011 through 2014. What is known is that the rural, remote communities of the Western and Northwest regions will not experience price relief until the middle of 2023, even if a prospective drop in the price of crude would lead to relief in south coastal and road system communities.

Note 1: The national heating fuel average is based on the price of heating fuel #2, the primary heating fuel utilized in the Lower 48. The average of Alaska's surveyed, unsubsidized communities is based on the fuel most commonly sold in the community. This is often heating fuel #1, which is better suited to Alaska's cold climates.

Note 2: Heating fuel averages are tracked, nationally, from October to March. Summer comparisons are based upon the final national averages reported at the end of March against the the average price of heating fuel in the surveyed, unsubsidized Alaskan communities.

Researchers: National average price is from the March 28, 2022 report from the [U.S. Energy Information Administration \(EIA\)](https://www.eia.gov/).

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Interactive Map of DCRA Fuel Survey Data

The map to the right contains historical pricing for all 100 surveyed communities from Winter 2005 to present.

There are missing data points within the historical collection. Missing data points indicate that one of the following conditions occurred:

- The vendor did not sell a given fuel type at the time of the survey
- The vendor was out of inventory at the time of the survey
- The vendor was unresponsive or unreachable during the survey period

- In two instances, the recorded survey response was determined to be in error
 - Summer 2018, Wainwright - The commercial heating fuel price of \$7.30 per gallon was recorded instead of the residential rate
 - Winter 2018, Shishmaref - The heating fuel price was recorded as \$15.30 per gallon, more than \$10.00 per gallon more than either the reported Summer 2017 or Summer 2018 price

Researchers: DCRA fuel survey data is available through the Community Database Online for both [heating fuel](#) and [gasoline](#) data.

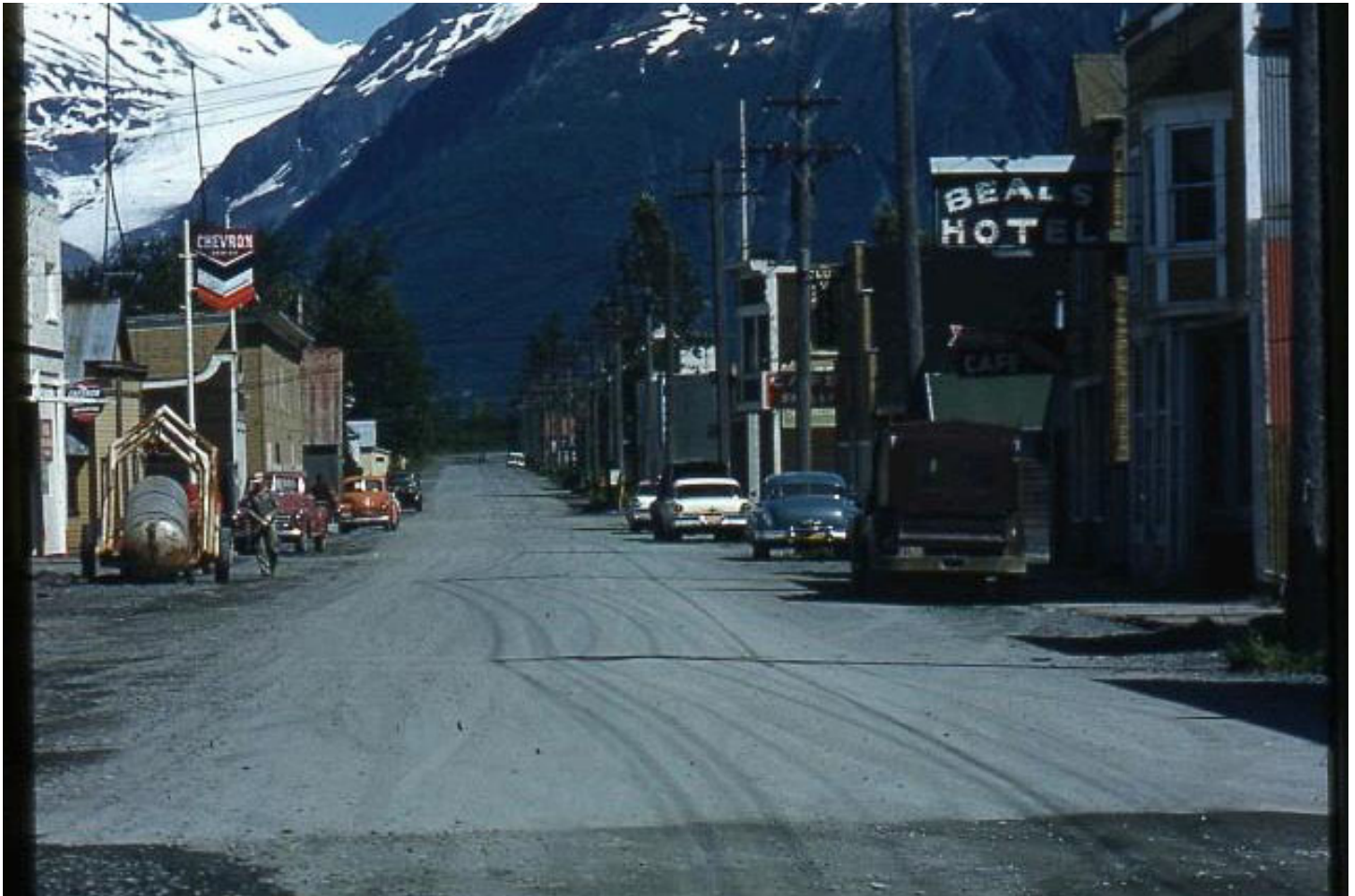


About Alaska North Slope Crude Pricing

Alaska North Slope Crude pricing is relevant to any conversation relating to unleaded gasoline and heating fuel prices in Alaska, although some of Alaska's fuel may be sourced from other indices, such as OPIS and PLATTS Singapore.

While high crude oil prices inevitably lead to high prices for petroleum distillates, these prices also increase state revenue and allow Alaska's decision makers to enact programs and policies to mitigate the impacts these prices have upon its residents, such as [the energy rebate that was distributed in 2008](#) and [a similar rebate in 2022](#) to every eligible Permanent Fund Dividend recipient.

The Alaska Department of Revenue's Tax Division reports on the [daily price and output](#) and the [monthly average price](#) of Alaska North Slope Crude.



Historical Alaska Fuel Price Reports

All prior interactive Alaska Fuel Price Reports are available through the [Interactive Maps](#) portion of the Community Database Online.

PDF copies of all historical (2005 to 2017) Alaska Fuel Price Reports may be obtained [here](#).



About the Alaska Fuel Price Report

The Alaska Fuel Price Report is an ongoing project of the Division of Community and Regional Affairs (DCRA). On 34 occasions from November 2005 to the present, DCRA has surveyed the same 100 selected communities across Alaska and obtained pricing information for unleaded gasoline and heating fuel.

Due to the inherent challenges related to surveying rural Alaskan communities, actual contact dates within a given survey period may range from three days to six weeks apart. Gasoline and heating fuel prices are based on the price of fuel on the actual day of contact.

National pricing data is sourced from the [U.S. Energy Information Administration](#).

Alaska North Slope crude pricing data is sourced from the [Alaska Department of Revenue](#).

For more information about this report, please contact [DCRA Research and Analysis](#).