

Gasoline Prices Hit Record High

Residents of southern California are trying to get used to skyrocketing prices for gasoline. The average price for 87 octane economy gas is \$2.22, almost 30 percent higher today than it was 12 months ago. The lowest gas price in the Southland right now is \$2.09 a gallon at the Seashell station in Arcadia. The station manager, Everett, said the reason his gas is cheaper than elsewhere is that he bought a lot of gas two years ago at reduced prices, so he is passing his savings on to his customers.

The lines at the Seashell station often run 10 to 20 vehicles long. The police have been here several times because cars block traffic on Horsetrail Drive. Everett said, "I tell people in line that the Barco station a block away is only \$2.14, but they'd rather wait and save 5 cents. It's OK with me, of course. I don't mind making money."

A young man pumping gas said he had waited in line for 20 minutes. When asked why he didn't go a block away where there were no lines, he said, "Every penny counts. When I bought this '99 Bummer, gas was only \$1 a gallon, which was pretty cheap. So, even though I only get eight miles per gallon, I wasn't paying that much to fill my tank. But today's prices are killing me. I drive to work, and I drive to the grocery store. That's it. I used to drive around the neighborhood just to show off my wheels, but I can't do that any more."