



March 5, 2021

NEWS RELEASE – BCUC Releases Fuel Price Data Collection Report

VANCOUVER – Today, the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) released its first [Fuel Market Report](#) (Report), which provides staff observations about fuel pricing behaviour in specific geographical areas of BC, as part of a fuel price data collection project. The public is invited to provide comments or further observations on the BCUC's Report.

From July 2020 to December 2020, the BCUC collected retail fuel data for cities we heard about most, including; Kamloops, Kelowna, West Kelowna, Port Alberni, Powell River, Revelstoke, Squamish and Vernon, as well as Langley, Nanaimo and Metro Vancouver for comparative purposes, from the Oil Price Information Service and the Kent Group Ltd. The results of the data validate the experiences of customers and are consistent with a number of comments the BCUC received from the public, including:

- Retail prices for regular gasoline and diesel at gas stations fluctuate throughout the day;
- Differences in the price of retail fuel components (e.g., wholesale price, crude prices, etc.) lead to differences in the price at the pump between cities. Changes to the retail fuel price in some of the sample cities appear to be less dependent on the price of the major components;
- The price differences between two different cities are not always consistent (i.e., the same city may have a higher retail price than a neighbouring city one day, but a lower price the next); and
- Retail prices in regions adjacent to regions with higher fuel taxes (e.g., Vancouver) exhibit similar pump prices to those in higher tax regions despite lower tax rates (e.g., Squamish).

The BCUC also identified a number of areas that warrant further exploration to enhance the price transparency of BC's fuel market. These include:

- Establishing the actual price of fuel purchased by retailers and the origin of that supply.
- Studying the impact of station throughput and the number of stations per city on retail prices.
- Exploring the impact of market concentration of suppliers and retailers and its impact on pump prices.
- Gathering information on the relationship between retailers and their suppliers.
- Measuring the effects of intraday price fluctuations on the overall price of fuel and the benefits and costs to consumers.
- Studying the market dynamics of areas that exhibited negative retail margins (i.e., retailers are selling below cost).

The BCUC will engage with the fuel industry to bring clarity and transparency to these pricing observations. The ongoing collection of fuel data will enable the BCUC to explore the above noted areas of interest and publish future periodic market reports with further insights into the fuel market in BC. Currently, those in the wholesale and retail industry are required to submit fuel data to the BCUC in accordance with the BC government's [Fuel Price Transparency \(FPT\) Regulations](#) and [Special Direction](#), respectively.

To read the BCUC's Fuel Market Report, please visit the [News & Reports](#) page on [GasPricesBC.ca](#).

Background

On June 15, 2020, the BCUC announced that it would be expanding its fuel price data collecting and reporting for select cities in BC on an ad-hoc basis. The gathering and sharing of additional data is the result of public feedback, as the BCUC heard from many individuals seeking more specific retail pricing data.

As Administrator of BC's [Fuel Price Transparency Act](#), the BCUC is responsible for collecting and publishing information about gasoline and diesel fuel activities in BC, in an effort to promote competitiveness, and public confidence in the competitiveness of the fuel market.

About the BCUC

The BCUC is an independent regulatory body, responsible for regulating British Columbia's energy utilities, as well as its compulsory automobile insurance rates, and intra-provincial pipelines rates. The BCUC is also responsible for administering BC's *Fuel Price Transparency Act*. It is the BCUC's role to balance the interests of customers with the interests of the businesses it regulates. The BCUC carries out fair and transparent reviews of matters within its jurisdiction and considers public input where public interest is impacted.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Krissy Van Loon

Manager, Communications

Phone: 604.660.4727

Email: Krissy.VanLoon@bcuc.com