

FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY  
PUBLIC ROADS ADMINISTRATION  
WASHINGTON

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Informational Memorandum No. 12

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Subject: Traffic density trends.

Available traffic data from automatic traffic recorders, toll facilities, and urban sources show that drastic decreases in traffic volumes have occurred since May 15 in the gas-rationed area. Percentage increases or decreases are based on specific periods in May 1942, as compared with the same periods in 1941.

Total traffic at 98 automatic traffic recorder stations in 15 States in the gas-rationed area decreased 18 percent during the first two full weeks in May and 45 percent in the last two weeks of May, as compared with traffic a year ago. The traffic decrease at 167 stations in 23 States amounted to 13.6 percent and 16.9 percent for similar periods in the non-rationed area.

Data from 9 toll facilities in Maine, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Florida for the last two weeks of May showed that passenger-car traffic decreased 36 percent, while commercial-vehicle traffic at these same facilities increased 9 percent. Preliminary information for the first part of June indicates, however, that the increase in commercial-vehicle traffic may not be maintained. Traffic volumes on toll bridges near large urban places decreased less than those on toll facilities in strictly rural areas.

For the first week that gasoline was rationed, passenger-car traffic using the Sumner Tunnel in Boston, Massachusetts, decreased 20 percent, while the commercial-vehicle traffic decreased about 4 percent as compared with similar traffic in the like period in 1941.

Effort will be made, through the cooperation of the Institute of Traffic Engineers, to assemble what information is available regarding trends of traffic volumes in urban areas. Usable information has thus far been received from Boston and Washington.

In Boston the "volume counts show that traffic was off about 13 percent previous to May 15 from similar period in 1941, and that since May 15 it has dropped another 10 percent or 11 percent, so that today traffic in Boston is 23 percent to 24 percent lower than it was a year ago."

In Washington the traffic volume from May 15 to May 31 at 11 points decreased 16 percent as compared with average traffic for May 1941.

The traffic information from automatic traffic recorder stations is shown in the following table:



AUTOMATIC TRAFFIC RECORDER DATA FOR PERIODS IN MAY 1941 AND 1942  
(265 stations in 34 States)

Region and State	No. of stations	1941	1942	Percentage change from 1941	1941	1942	Percentage change from 1941
		May 4-17	May 3-16		May 18-31	May 17-30	
		vehicles	vehicles		vehicles	vehicles	
<b>NEW ENGLAND</b>							
Maine	3	43,003	35,174	-18.2	50,333	27,774	-44.8
New Hampshire	1	80,548	53,622	-33.4	70,237	29,180	-58.5
Vermont	2	38,516	34,462	-10.5	46,903	26,740	-43.0
Massachusetts	6	510,150	419,235	-17.8	589,901	312,595	-47.0
Rhode Island	4	106,636	105,072	-1.5	133,117	81,739	-38.6
Connecticut	14	977,899	877,149	-10.3	1,223,130	628,171	-48.6
6 States	30	1,756,752	1,524,714	-13.2	2,113,621	1,106,199	-47.7
<b>MIDDLE ATLANTIC</b>							
(rationed area)							
New York	7	386,246	306,191	-20.7	497,493	273,516	-45.0
Pennsylvania	15	466,940	370,978	-20.6	511,205	282,129	-44.8
2 States	22	853,186	677,169	-20.6	1,008,698	555,645	-44.9
(nonrationed area)							
New York	1	38,472	40,792	+ 6.0	41,982	37,284	-11.2
Pennsylvania	10	407,098	359,404	-11.7	468,428	356,820	-23.8
Subtotal	11	445,570	400,196	-10.2	510,410	394,104	-22.8
<b>SOUTH ATLANTIC</b>							
North section							
Delaware	3	150,345	127,345	-15.3	143,967	82,806	-42.5
Maryland	9	542,141	410,115	-24.4	544,636	300,910	-44.8
Virginia	1	38,014	29,646	-22.0	40,433	19,258	-52.4
West Virginia							
(rationed area)	1	49,047	42,994	-12.3	51,961	33,650	-35.2
4 States	14	779,547	610,100	-21.7	780,997	436,624	-44.1
West Virginia							
(nonrationed area)	6	120,091	98,406	-18.1	136,215	95,536	-29.9
<b>SOUTH ATLANTIC</b>							
South section							
North Carolina	15	461,486	363,949	-21.1	454,299	268,047	-41.0
South Carolina	5	146,541	117,703	-19.7	142,580	92,655	-35.0
Florida							
(rationed area)	12	362,043	281,256	-22.3	399,921	238,038	-40.5
3 States	32	970,070	762,908	-21.4	996,800	598,740	-39.9
Florida							
(nonrationed area)	1	14,524	14,326	-1.4	14,064	13,838	-1.6
15 States							
(rationed area)	98	4,359,555	3,574,891	-18.0	4,900,116	2,697,208	-45.0
<b>EAST NORTH CENTRAL</b>							
Ohio	9	326,185	257,271	-21.1	359,437	276,666	-23.0
Indiana	16	581,496	481,441	-17.2	677,887	497,152	-26.7
Michigan	3	62,947	45,373	-27.9	73,671	52,101	-29.3
Wisconsin	9	374,734	291,051	-22.3	434,194	338,738	-22.0
4 States	37	1,345,362	1,075,136	-20.1	1,545,189	1,164,657	-24.6

Region and State	No. of stations	1941 May 4-17 vehicles	1942 May 3-16 vehicles	Percentage change from 1941	1941 May 18-31 vehicles	1942 May 17-30 vehicles	Percentage change from 1941
<b>WEST NORTH CENTRAL</b>							
Iowa	32	468,265	365,980	-21.8	533,082	421,978	-20.8
North Dakota	3	29,465	22,874	-22.4	33,083	26,294	-20.5
Nebraska	9	130,579	120,269	-7.9	152,326	128,302	-15.8
Kansas	8	164,164	129,066	-21.4	175,240	141,015	-19.5
4 States	52	792,473	638,189	-19.5	893,731	717,589	-19.7
<b>EAST SOUTH CENTRAL</b>							
Kentucky	8	154,147	138,312	-10.3	163,575	142,106	-13.1
Tennessee	4	92,727	75,425	-18.7	98,757	75,652	-23.4
Mississippi	6	162,146	125,346	-22.7	188,965	139,943	-25.9
3 States	18	409,020	339,083	-17.1	451,297	357,701	-20.7
<b>WEST SOUTH CENTRAL</b>							
Louisiana	8	353,497	315,579	-10.7	368,304	325,784	-11.5
Oklahoma	4	130,825	107,643	-17.7	142,600	111,139	-22.1
Texas	21	844,188	761,869	-9.8	842,395	750,253	-10.9
3 States	33	1,328,510	1,185,091	-10.8	1,353,299	1,187,176	-12.3
<b>MOUNTAIN</b>							
Montana	12	132,600	100,649	-24.1	145,661	104,936	-28.0
Wyoming	1	18,770	15,768	-16.0	14,294	11,861	-17.0
Colorado	2	85,470	73,635	-13.8	87,675	75,085	-14.4
New Mexico	8	189,454	178,905	-5.6	185,708	179,659	-3.3
Arizona	5	103,960	99,628	-4.2	109,338	102,427	-6.3
Utah	3	74,758	62,466	-16.4	100,693	88,092	-12.5
6 States	31	605,012	531,051	-12.1	643,369	562,060	-12.6
<b>PACIFIC</b>							
Washington	6	224,921	220,031	-2.2	249,629	236,194	-5.4
California	7	171,321	131,467	-23.3	204,160	142,087	-30.4
Oregon	2	18,625	15,604	-16.2	21,849	16,730	-23.4
3 States	15	414,867	367,102	-11.5	475,638	395,011	-17.0
Total, non-rationed area - 23 States *	167	4,130,067	3,568,944	-13.6	4,478,023	3,723,015	-16.9
Total, rationed area 15 States *	98	4,359,555	3,574,891	-18.0	4,900,116	2,697,208	-45.0
Total - 34 States	265	8,489,622	7,143,835	-15.9	9,378,139	6,420,223	-31.5

\* 4 States have portions in both areas.

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