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It would be funny if the sun had a grandpa who said, "Hey, sonny."



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By Theresa Juva

Rising oil prices will push up costs everywhere



Photo credit: Getty Image

Whether you own a car or not, your bank account is still going to take a hit from exploding oil prices, which have reached \$104 a barrel.

From clothes and cosmetics to asphalt roads and hospital equipment, the cost of oil affects almost everything in our everyday lives.

"Oil is ubiquitous; it's all over the economy. It's not a question of picking out specific things – everything is affected one way or another" when oil price rise, said David Knapp, chief energy economist of Energy Intelligence Group.

Here's how Mid-East turmoil and skyrocketing oil costs have already wreaked havoc on your wallet – and what could be next.

Air Travel:

Yikes. Domestic airfare prices have soared 30 percent since January, mostly because of fuel costs, said Rick Seaney, CEO of FareCompare.com.

If you paid \$200 for a round-trip then, you're now looking at \$260, he said.

"If (oil) prices go up to \$120 a barrel, ticket prices are probably going to go up \$10 each week, round trip," he said.

Seaney expects "more hikes, so I would lock in now," for trips in March, April, or May, but don't rush to buy summertime vacay tickets just yet.

"Typically airlines start to manage their cheaper seats three months before," he said.

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Food:

Businesses will cope with rising fuel costs by reluctantly passing it on to customers, said Ted Potrikus, executive vice president of the Retail Council of New York State. For example, some pizzerias that used to do free deliveries are now adding surcharges to drive a pizza to your doorstep.

And that tasty dinner on your plate probably traveled far on a diesel-fueled truck to the supermarket, so brace for increases on supermarket shelves. Groceries are expected to rise 3 to 4 percent this year, partly due to energy costs, experts said.

American Trucking Associations, the country's largest trucking trade group, projects the trucking industry will spend \$122.3 billion on fuel this year, a \$21 billion increase from last year and one of the highest spending years on record.

But it's not just shipping costs driving up food prices.

With more corn being used for ethanol in gasoline, farmers are paying more for it to feed cows, which means higher meat prices.

Pork has jumped 4 to 5 percent this year, said Brian Todd, president of the Food Institute, while beef has increased 3 to 4 percent.

Car Travel:

Thinking of a weekend getaway? You'll have to shell out 76 cents more a gallon than you did a year ago, with the average national gas price hitting \$3.52 in the last week, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

And it could get worse, experts warn.

"Every time you see oil (barrel) prices increase by \$10, you add about 25 cents at the pump," said James Williams, energy economist at WTRG Economics.

Four bucks a gallon or more is possible if unrest spreads to Saudi Arabia, he said, and that could lead to job cuts and another recession.

New Yorkers on oil prices:

Ben Millard, 23, Midtown

"I do travel a lot (by plane), so I'm worried about it. It would make me adjust my spending habits to budget for travel."

Kasia Merrill, 20, Clinton Hill

"I would hope (rising oil prices) would initiate having more locally grown foods available" and encourage people to bike.

Jon Bergman, 39, Midtown

"It costs a lot to fill up my car," a Chevy Silverado. "Normally it costs \$60 to \$65 to fill. Lately it's closer to \$75 or \$80."

Kwadwo Konadu, 51, NYC cab driver, Yonkers

"If you do a 12-hour-shift, it's \$45 or \$50" to fill up the cab. "Before it was \$25. My take home is reduced by the gas."



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