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GARDEN STATE TRAFFIC

New Jerseyans spend nearly 2 hours a day in their cars

Hey New Jersey drivers, you think you got it bad? Well, you're right! Compared to drivers elsewhere in the country, New Jerseyans encounter worse traffic, are more likely to get stuck in congestion and spend more time – 23 minutes longer on average – in their cars every day.

The latest *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* found nearly 4-in-10 New Jerseyans report getting stuck in traffic jams more than once a week, this includes 17% who encounter daily traffic jams and 22% who hit jams several times a week. Another 24% get stuck in traffic several times a month and the remainder encounter jams infrequently (21%) or never (14%).

The 39% of Garden State residents who encounter multiple jams each week is significantly higher than the 24% of Americans who reported the same experience in an *ABC News Poll* conducted last year.

“Not that anyone really needs this confirmed, but New Jersey traffic is among the worst in the nation, and it's bad in every corner of the state,” observed Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

The poll also found that frequent traffic jams occur in every part of the state. Leading the pack are residents of the Northern Shore area of the state. Nearly half (48%) of Monmouth/Ocean county drivers report getting stuck in traffic jams at least several times a

week. They are closely followed in this dubious honor by drivers from the Northeast (43%), Delaware Valley (40%) and Urban Core counties (39%). Just behind them are residents of the Route 1 Corridor (35%), Central Hills (34%) and the Garden Core (32%) counties.

New Jersey versus U.S. Traffic Experience *

Rate area traffic conditions	Average time spent in car each day		Get stuck in traffic jams					
	NJ	USA	NJ	USA				
Excellent	7%	14%	Minutes	110	87	Every day	NJ	USA
Good	24%	39%				17%	9%	
Fair	33%	32%				Several times a week	22%	15%
Poor	35%	15%				Several times a month	24%	24%
No opinion	1%	0%				A few times a year	21%	33%
						Never	14%	19%
			No opinion	2%	1%			

* National data from ABC News Poll conducted January 2005 with 1,204 adults.

So what’s the bottom line of all this traffic? The typical New Jerseyan – as either driver or passenger – spends almost 2 hours in a car every day – that’s 110 minutes to be exact. This is 23 minutes longer than the average American, who spends only 87 minutes in a car each day.

Which New Jerseyans spends the most time in their car? That would be residents in the more remote Garden Core counties, clocking in at an average 140 minutes per day. Also averaging at or just above the 2 hour mark are folks in the Delaware Valley (126 minutes) and Northeast (118 minutes). Urban Core (101 minutes) and Route 1 Corridor (99 minutes) residents clock in at more than one and a half hours in their cars. Central Hills residents have the shortest driving duration, spending only 86 minutes in their cars each day – the only New Jersey region to come near the national average.

The survey also indicates that having to chauffeur your kids can add nearly half an hour to the typical New Jerseyan’s drive time. Parents spend an average of 128 minutes behind the wheel, compared to 101 minutes for those without kids.

The daily driving experience in New Jersey is also expressed in a negative opinion of traffic conditions in general. Few residents give traffic conditions in their local area a positive rating of excellent (7%) or good (24%), as opposed to more than two-thirds who say local traffic conditions are only fair (33%) or poor (35%). This is much more negative than the view across the country, where a majority of Americans view their local traffic conditions positively – 53% compared to only 31% here in New Jersey.

Regionally, it is no surprise that residents of the Northern Shore counties – who are most likely to get stuck in traffic jams – are the least positive about their local traffic conditions (22% positive). What may be more puzzling, though, is why Central Hills residents – who spend the least time in their cars of all Garden State residents – are nearly as negative (only 23% positive).

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* was conducted by telephone with 802 New Jersey adults from July 11 to 13, 2006. This sample has a margin of error of ± 3.5 percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute and originally published by the Gannett New Jersey newspaper group (Asbury Park Press, Courier-Post, Courier News, Daily Journal, Daily Record, Home News Tribune, and Ocean County Observer).

REGION OF STATE:
Northeast – Bergen, Passaic counties
Urban Core – Essex, Hudson counties
Route 1 Corridor – Mercer, Middlesex, Union counties
Central Hills – Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset counties
Northern Shore – Monmouth, Ocean counties
Delaware Valley – Burlington, Camden, Gloucester counties
Garden Core – Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Salem, Sussex, Warren

DATA TABLES

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

- How would you rate the traffic conditions in your area – excellent, good, fair or poor?

	TOTAL	REGION OF STATE							COMMUNITY TYPE			HAS CHILDREN	
		Northeast	Urban Core	Route 1 Corridor	Central Hills	Northern Shore	Delaware Valley	Garden Core	Urban	Stable town	Expanding suburb	Yes	No
Excellent	7%	11%	9%	7%	4%	6%	4%	6%	7%	7%	8%	5%	9%
Good	24%	22%	26%	26%	19%	16%	32%	28%	25%	25%	22%	26%	23%
Fair	33%	28%	31%	30%	44%	29%	34%	38%	28%	36%	31%	37%	31%
Poor	35%	38%	32%	37%	32%	48%	30%	28%	39%	31%	38%	32%	37%
(VOL) Don't know	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	802	145	95	121	112	125	109	76	134	319	334	245	557

2. Just your best estimate, on an average day, how much time would you say you spend in a car for all reasons, including work, school, errands and leisure?

	TOTAL	REGION OF STATE							COMMUNITY TYPE			HAS CHILDREN	
		Northeast	Urban Core	Route 1 Corridor	Central Hills	Northern Shore	Delaware Valley	Garden Core	Urban	Stable town	Expanding suburb	Yes	No
No time	6%	9%	5%	4%	6%	7%	9%	1%	12%	5%	4%	4%	7%
Less than half hour	8%	6%	11%	9%	4%	3%	12%	5%	10%	6%	8%	8%	8%
Half hour to 45 minutes	15%	14%	13%	22%	16%	13%	8%	21%	13%	17%	14%	16%	14%
1 hour to 90 minutes	25%	25%	30%	23%	39%	22%	18%	27%	22%	25%	28%	23%	26%
2 to 2 and half hours	21%	19%	15%	21%	20%	31%	23%	19%	16%	25%	21%	20%	22%
3 hours or more	20%	23%	20%	16%	12%	22%	26%	24%	23%	19%	21%	27%	17%
(VOL) Don't Know	4%	4%	5%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%	4%	4%	3%	2%	5%
AVERAGE (Minutes)	110	118	101	99	86	109	126	140	111	113	108	128	101
<i>Unwtd N</i>	<i>802</i>	<i>145</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>125</i>	<i>109</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>319</i>	<i>334</i>	<i>245</i>	<i>557</i>

3. How often do you, yourself, get stuck driving in traffic jams – every day, several times a week, several times a month, a few times a year, or never?

	TOTAL	REGION OF STATE							COMMUNITY TYPE			HAS CHILDREN	
		Northeast	Urban Core	Route 1 Corridor	Central Hills	Northern Shore	Delaware Valley	Garden Core	Urban	Stable town	Expanding suburb	Yes	No
Every day	17%	19%	19%	13%	11%	22%	19%	14%	18%	16%	17%	19%	16%
Several times a week	22%	24%	20%	22%	23%	26%	21%	18%	17%	24%	24%	24%	21%
Several times a month	24%	25%	25%	27%	30%	25%	17%	20%	21%	25%	24%	24%	24%
A few times a year	21%	15%	18%	21%	24%	16%	25%	38%	20%	24%	19%	21%	21%
Never	14%	13%	16%	18%	11%	8%	17%	9%	21%	10%	14%	12%	16%
(VOL) Don't know	2%	4%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	3%	1%	1%	1%	2%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	<i>802</i>	<i>145</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>125</i>	<i>109</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>319</i>	<i>334</i>	<i>245</i>	<i>557</i>

Results for this *Monmouth University/Gannett NJ Poll* are based on telephone interviews conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute on July 11-13, 2006 with a statewide random sample of 802 adult residents. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported by gender or party identification, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

It is the Monmouth University Polling Institute's policy to conduct surveys of all adult New Jersey residents, including voters and non-voters, on issues which affect the state. Specific voter surveys are conducted when appropriate during election cycles.

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