

Washington Senator Wants Answers On High Gas Prices

By [Scott Graf](#) and Kate Elston, Boise State Public Radio, June 11, 2012

The latest Lundberg Survey on US gas prices shows the national average right now is \$3.62 a gallon. In Boise, it's about \$.15 higher. But in Seattle, gas prices are over \$4.20. That's the highest current price in the U-S.

As a result of such discrepancies, U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell has asked the Federal Trade Commission to investigate gas prices, and why they're so high in Washington.

Robert McCullough is an energy consultant. His research was part of Cantwell's request. McCullough says after the fire at the Cherry Point refinery near Bellingham, other West Coast refineries cut oil production. And he questions why.

"When that happens in the real world, we'd be pretty suspicious," McCullough says. "A local hardware store has a fire and the other hardware stores close and you have to pay \$100 to buy a hammer, you'd be calling the local district attorney to look into it."

A spokesperson from The Western States Petroleum Association has said refineries don't manipulate the market, and that dozens of investigations have shown that.