

Fuel Surcharge Returns to Normal

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In summer 2008, gas prices hovered at \$4 a gallon. Those high fuel costs -- and added surcharges -- added a big expense to Deb Fry's bottom line. The co-owner of Select Stone Co. in Monclova, Ohio, said she paid an extra \$40,000 to \$60,000 in fuel expenses last year.

This year, those extra costs abated. "Right now, inbound we're working in the 20 percent fuel surcharge range," Fry said. "Outbound, we don't fuel surcharge because we're hauling our own product. We typically have a flat rate to whoever we're hauling to."

Kenneth Pund, president of Bedford Glens Garden Center in Cleveland, Ohio, said fuel surcharges stopped altogether for him. "Compared to last year, those extra gas charges have pretty much disappeared," he said.