

Report: Calif. drivers are the nation's most stressed

By Gary Richards, San Jose Mercury News

California's improved economy has brought commutes to an unprecedented slowdown from one end of the state to the other, making drivers here the most stressed out in the nation.

A nationwide report released late Tuesday found that motorists in California's congested population centers spend nearly two work weeks a year stuck in creep-and-crawl traffic – nearly double the national average.

According to the Texas A&M Transportation Institute and a West Coast traffic organization called Inrix, which surveyed traffic on 471 urban streets and highways across the country, an estimated \$160 billion is lost annually in wasted fuel, lost income and lost time across the country while motorists cling to a steering wheel instead of a computer mouse.

The worst area is Washington, D.C., at 82 hours of lost time, but the top 10 is a roadmap from Northern California to Southern California: Los Angeles comes in No. 2 with 80 hours of delays, followed by San Francisco-Oakland with 78, New York at 74 and the San Jose area at 67. Riverside rounds out the top 10 at 59. Compare that to the national average of a measly 42 hours.

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