

Oil Vulnerability in Australian Cities: Qld report

Outer suburbs feel squeeze from rising petrol prices

A new Griffith University report has found poorer outer suburbs in Australian cities are likely to be most affected by rising petrol costs because of their dependence on motor vehicles and limited access to public transport.

This contrasts sharply with wealthy inner suburbs, which are less vulnerable to high bowser prices because of their higher incomes and better access to public transport.

See also a later article about more recent reports at

<http://www.aspo-australia.org.au/latest/location-housing-debt-and-oil-vulnerability-in-the-australian-city.html>

The report, entitled Oil Vulnerability in Australian Cities, was produced by Griffith University's Urban Research Program and co-authored by Dr Jago Dodson and Dr Neil Sipe. It is believed to be the first study of its kind in the world to identify oil vulnerability at the neighbourhood level.

The report comes only a week after the Australian Senate Transport committee announced an inquiry into the socio-economic impact of rising oil prices.

"The reason why rising fuel costs will impact on lower socio-economic groups in the outer suburbs is twofold. First, these households are already at a greater risk of adverse impacts from any socio-economic change," Dr Dodson said.

"Secondly, these households are more dependent on cars for travel. This dependence means residents who rely on cheap petrol to drive to work or the shops are highly vulnerable to increased fuel costs. This may be compounded by the lack of alternative modes of transport, such as public transport, walking or cycling."

Dr Sipe said governments need to start understanding how rising oil prices will affect Australian suburbs and start planning to limit the impacts on car dependent neighbourhoods through provision of better public transport services.

"The humble local suburban bus stop is likely to become a more important part of community infrastructure as fuel prices increase, than any cross-harbour, cross-river or cross-city road tunnel," Dr Sipe said.

The report found Brisbane's outer growth corridors were most vulnerable to rising petrol prices. These areas included the suburbs of Beenleigh, Caboolture and Ipswich.

In Sydney, Liverpool, Cabramatta and Penrith fared the worst. In Melbourne the Brimbank, Whittlesea and Dandenong areas were most vulnerable.

The full report can be viewed at

http://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/48575/urp-rp06-dodson-sipe-2005.pdf

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