

How Rising Gas Prices Are Changing Car Values in Georgia and Your Diminished Value Claim

Gas prices and car values in Georgia are moving together in a way most drivers have not seen since 2022, and it is quietly changing what a repaired vehicle is worth on the resale market. Georgia's statewide average sat at \$3.76 per gallon in mid-August, down from \$3.87 the week before but still 85 cents higher than the \$2.91 drivers were paying at the same point last year. Atlanta was running above the state average at \$3.83. Nationally the average has been hovering right around \$4.

That kind of sustained increase changes what buyers want. And what buyers want is exactly what determines the size of a [diminished value claim](#) after your car is repaired.

What Georgia Drivers Are Actually Paying

Georgia has been cheaper than the national average all year, which is normal for the state, but the year over year jump is the part that matters. Paying 85 cents more per gallon than last summer works out to roughly \$13 more on every fill of a 15 gallon tank. For a household running two vehicles with typical Atlanta commute mileage, that is a few hundred dollars a year showing up in a budget that was already stretched by insurance and vehicle payments.

Prices eased slightly in early August as crude softened, but the trend for the year has been upward and the volatility has not gone away. Georgia's record high remains \$4.49 per gallon, set in June 2022. Nobody is at that level today, but the market is behaving as if buyers expect fuel to stay expensive.

Fuel Costs Are Pushing Different Vehicles in Different Directions

Here is the part that surprises people. The used vehicle market is not moving as one block anymore. In July, wholesale values nationally were up just 1.3% year over year, and almost all of that gain came from a narrow slice of the market.

- **Electric vehicles were up 10.5% year over year.** EVs also held above 4% of all units moving through the national auction index for a second straight period, a share not recorded before this year.
- **Everything non-electric was up just 0.4%.** That is essentially flat against last summer.
- **Compact cars have been the strongest conventional segment.** Small, fuel-efficient, cheap to run. Exactly what you would expect at \$4 gas.
- **Pickups and SUVs are down, and the softness has now spread into midsize cars.** Georgia is a truck and SUV state, which means a lot of local owners are sitting on vehicles in the weakest part of the market.

We covered the beginning of this divide in our look at how [the used car market is splitting in two](#). What has changed since is the cause. Earlier in the year the split was mostly about supply and off-lease inventory. Now fuel cost is doing a growing share of the work.

Why This Changes Your Georgia Diminished Value Claim

Diminished value is the difference between what your vehicle would be worth without an accident on its record and what it is actually worth with one. Both halves of that equation are market numbers, and both move when the market moves.

The practical consequence: a vehicle in a segment that is holding or gaining value has more value available to lose. A \$45,000 SUV and a \$45,000 EV that suffer identical damage do not produce identical claims, because the market is treating those two vehicles differently right now.

Vehicle Type	Market Direction	What It Means for Your Claim
Electric vehicle	Strongest segment	Higher pre-loss value; older comparables understate it
Compact car	Gaining	Small vehicles are in demand; claim base is stronger
Hybrid	Demand elevated	Often priced as a conventional model by default
Midsize car	Recently softening	Date of loss matters; the segment turned mid-year
SUV	Lagging the market	Insurer comparables may reflect a weaker market than yours
Pickup truck	Down notably	Widest gap between owner expectation and auction data

A percentage formula applied to every vehicle the same way cannot capture any of this. That is the core problem with the approach most insurers still default to when they price a Georgia diminished value claim.

The 17c Problem Gets Worse in a Moving Market

Georgia insurers routinely reach for the 17c formula, which caps diminished value at a fixed percentage of pre-accident value and then discounts it further for mileage and damage severity. The formula has no input for vehicle segment, no input for fuel prices, and no input for whether the local market for your body style is rising or falling.

The result is a number that happens to be wrong in both directions depending on what you drive. An EV owner using 17c is almost certainly leaving money on the table, because the formula caps the loss well below what a segment that is up double digits year over year can actually shed on a Carfax hit. We break down why [the 17c formula is not a fair standard in Georgia](#) and why it has never been a legal requirement here.

Atlanta Commutes Make the Effect Larger Here

Metro Atlanta is a long-commute market. Drivers on I-285, I-75, and GA-400 log more annual miles than the national average, which means fuel cost is a bigger line item in a local buyer's decision than it is in a dense city with transit alternatives.

That shows up in what moves on Atlanta lots. When gas is cheap, a used three-row SUV with a V8 sells at a modest discount to a comparable crossover. When gas holds near \$4 and a buyer is calculating a 40 mile round-trip commute, that discount widens. Your vehicle's segment is doing more work in the local resale market than it was doing eighteen months ago.

It is worth pairing this with what is happening to depreciation across the board. Our overview of [2026 car depreciation in Georgia](#) covers how the two effects compound on a repaired vehicle.

What to Do If Your Car Was Repaired This Year

- **Do not wait for the market to settle.** Your pre-loss value is fixed to the date of the accident. Waiting does not improve it, and it does make the evidence harder to gather.
- **Know your segment before you talk to the adjuster.** If you drive an EV, a hybrid, or a compact, the market is on your side right now and the insurer's default math is not reflecting that.
- **Ask for the comparables and check where they came from.** Comparables pulled from outside the Georgia market or from a different powertrain are the most common and most correctable error in a valuation.
- **Keep the full repair file.** The line-by-line repair order is what establishes damage severity, and severity is what a buyer discounts.
- **Remember the filing window.** Under O.C.G.A. Section 9-3-31, Georgia allows four years from the date of the accident for property damage claims. That is generous, but market evidence does not keep for four years. Our overview of [Georgia's diminished value laws](#) covers the legal framework.

Find Out What Your Georgia Claim Is Actually Worth

Send us your repair documents and vehicle details. We will tell you what your car was worth before the accident and what the accident record costs you in today's market.

[Get Your Free DV Estimate](#)[Read the Full Article Online](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

Do gas prices really affect my diminished value claim in Georgia?

Indirectly but measurably. Fuel costs change what buyers are willing to pay for different vehicle types, and diminished value is calculated against real market values. Right now electric and compact vehicles are outperforming while pickups and SUVs lag, which changes the dollar amount at stake on an identical repair.

My truck was repaired and the market is soft. Is the claim still worth filing?

Yes. A softer segment does not eliminate the accident-history discount, it just changes the base you are measuring from. Trucks and SUVs still carry substantial diminished value in Georgia because buyers of those vehicles pay attention to accident records and negotiate accordingly.

I drive an EV. Is my claim larger because of the current market?

Very possibly. Electric vehicle values have outperformed the broader market by a wide margin this year, which means there is more value present to lose. Insurers relying on older comparables or on a flat percentage formula will almost certainly understate an EV claim.

How long do I have to file a diminished value claim in Georgia?

Georgia's statute of limitations for property damage claims is four years from the date of the accident under O.C.G.A. Section 9-3-31. That is longer than most people expect, but market comparables and repair records become much harder to assemble as time passes, so filing sooner produces a stronger claim.

Does the insurance company have to use current market data?

They are obligated to pay for the actual loss in market value, and market value is a point-in-time figure tied to the date of the accident. If their valuation relies on comparables from a different period, a different region, or a different powertrain, that is a defensible point of dispute.

What if my car was not at fault but I used my own collision coverage?

You still have the right to pursue a third-party diminished value claim against the at-fault driver's insurer. Using your own collision coverage to get the repairs done does not waive your right to recover the loss in market value from the party responsible.