From Texas to the Dakotas, oil output has surged, ranking America once again among the world's top energy producers, but the boom hasn't stopped driv-ing gasoline prices. Unleaded regular had pushed up $2.60 per gallon nationwide by mid-week, up from $2.30 a gallon a year ago, reports AAA's daily price survey.

Analysts expect gas prices could climb another 20 cents by early spring, a gain of almost half a dollar in a year.

For the typical driver putting 250 miles per week on a V-6 powered Ford Fusion pickup truck, the nation's top-selling vehicle, gasoline for the daily commute to work will cost about $39 per week, up from about $31 last spring.

It's happening across the country, and few experts think it could fade soon.

Instead, energy-fed inflation could weigh on Washington policymakers later this year when they mull possible interest-rate increases.

Higher gasoline prices trace in part to the new surge in U.S. gasoline exports.

Tankers crossing the Gulf of Mexico are unloading gasoline in South American ports following Venezuela's oil sector collapse and the inability of Mexican refiners to make up all of their own production capacity.

"We've got plenty of crude oil in the United States. Production is blasting through all kinds of records," said Tom Kloza, head of global energy analysis at the market researcher Oil Price Information Service. "We've become perhaps the world's biggest exporter of gasoline."

At the same time, oil output by Saudi Arabia has finally surged. This has ticked up oil prices worldwide, attracting speculators and investors back into the commodity futures market to bet on rising energy prices. Kloza estimated these bets account for about a third of the rise in oil prices — and in turn gasoline prices — over the past year.

Investors looking for quick profits had touched off the dramatic rise in oil prices a decade ago. The benchmark U.S. crude oil surpassed $100 per barrel. Unleaded regular gasoline crested in summer 2008 at $4.10 per gallon on average. But heavy losses battered mon-ey managers by 2015, and they left the market.

That's when surprisingly big finds of U.S. crude oil and new drilling tech-niques reached refineries in high volume, a glut that filled tank farms and sent prices plummeting to $40 per barrel.

Alarmed by the so-called oil flooding boom in America, Saudi Arabia's leaders marshaled the cartel known as the Or-ganization of Petroleum Exporting Countries in a bid to push up global oil prices by first tearing them apart, trying to drive out U.S. producers. Trying to sustain its huge domestic social pro-grams made possible by oil exports, Saudi Arabia shipped oceans of oil worldwide. At many U.S. gas stations, unleaded fell below $1.85 per gallon.

Although a spate of bankruptcies shook the American Great Plains, home of the largest frackers, surging U.S. output to-wards a glut depressed prices worldwide. At many U.S. gas stations, unleaded fell below $1.50 per gallon.

As the oil glut eased and storage U.S. oil output to-high levels last seen in the 1970s, the Saudis retreated from the price war last year.

As oil glut eased and speculative buying re-placed for gasoline held steady as U.S. motorists logged 11 billion miles per year on 300 million cars and trucks. Oil priced over $87 per barrel in late January and has leveled off around $66, marking the end of the three-year spell of low prices, Kloza said.

"The average family is going to pay $450 to $500 more for gasoline this year than last year," Kloza estimated. "And $900 over what they paid in 2016. That's still $50 to $800 lower than what they paid every year from 2011 to 2014."

Although national gasoline prices have climbed about 40% in two years, economic analyst Joel Naroff said he doubts the higher expense will diminish consumer spending on gas or other items. "This is now beginning to dig into lower- and middle-income household wallets," said Naroff, co-author of the 2014 book Big Picture Economics: How to Navigate the New Global Economy. "But it's really going to be offset by the tax cuts approved by Congress in De-cember."

With families buying more ever more products online, rather than driving to the stores, Amazon, UPS, FedEx and other distri-bution chains companies will be pressed to look for savings in their oper-at ing costs, Naroff said.

"Even though it's go-ing to be offset by the tax cuts, I don't think we can dismiss higher gasoline prices," said Naroff, head of Naroff Economic Ad-visers of Holland, Pa.

If the energy costs ripple through the supply chain and pick up the in-flation rate, he said, the Federal Reserve Board perhaps late this year or next might respond with a rise in its intere-est rates, particularly if wage growth has kicked up and the tax cuts accelerate the economy.

"If we see rises in energy prices and rises in wages, these factors and in-creasing demand in the economy all lead to rising inflation," Naroff said. "That will translate into higher interest rates. Whether the higher rates cause the next recession will partly depend on how high and fast they are raised."

Amazon may try bringing packages from third-party merchants to its fulfillment centers.

Amazon fulfillment center, where they would be inserted into Amazon's for-mer delivery system. Right now they have to ship them to Amazon con-sumers themselves.

By using Amazon to pick up packages, the merchants could shave as much as a day off delivery times, a boon when time equals money and also customer satisfaction.

At least in its initial phase, the test would only involve deliveries between Amazon merchants and Amazon's own fulfillment centers and customers' homes.

When left, Amazon Fulfill-ment centers, the packages would still be delivered by one of several delivery systems Amazon already has in place, including UPS, FedEx, the U.S. Postal Service and local delivery contractors.

In the longer term, the project could expand into a larger, full-service delivery system that would circumvent Amazon's traditional last-mile ship-pers such as UPS and FedEx.

The Wall Street Journal first reported on Amazon's delivery service plans. Amazon would not comment on the reported delivery plans.

But with the U.S. Treasury to-ward a deficit of $1.2 trillion by the end of 2019, it's clear the government will have to raise more revenue via taxes.

If not, the Senate leaders say they will raise taxes on investment income and capital gains, which would hit homeowners and businesses, thereby eroding the economy and potentially bringing on yet another recession.

Amazon plans to experiment delivering smaller packages and, in a move that would be a first for the world's largest online retailer, may be testing a plan that would allow it to deliver goods to consumers directly from Amazon's fulfillment centers.