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ABC10

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You're likely paying more for auto insurance here in California than you were last year, according to new data.

The Consumer Price Index shows auto insurance rates went up 20% from May 2023 to May 2024, based on the U.S. average.

Amy Bach, executive director of consumer advocacy group United Policyholders, says the pandemic started a ripple effect.

“Across all lines of insurance, home, car, you name it... business, prices are up, options are down,” said Bach. “A lot of it stems from the supply chain interruption that started in the first year of COVID-19.”

She says this then caused claim costs to go up for insurers — for car parts, labor and repairs — then they passed those cost increases to their customers.

“It's getting even more challenging, especially for young male drivers to hold on to their auto insurance at a premium they can afford,” said Bach.

She says those looking for car insurance should know there is competition among insurance companies and encourages prospective buyers to shop around and compare rates.

Bach also says it does not pay to be loyal to one particular insurance company unless auto insurance is bundled and discounted with other insurances — which happens less these days due to increasing difficulties in finding home insurance.

If you've done the above, remember you can always increase your deductible to bring your premium down some.

“These are hard choices. We really want people to have full coverage. We don't want to see people dropping coverage and we don't even like to see people raising their deductibles,” said Bach. “But in this day and age, those are the strategies that are going to bring the premium back into the realm of affordability for a lot of consumers.”

With summer now in full swing and temperatures increasing, home owners should also know electricity costs are up nearly 6% from last year and fuel is up more than 3%.