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# EIA Short-Term and Winter Fuels Outlook



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*National Capital Area Chapter*

*United States Association for Energy Economics (USAEE)*

*October 21, 2011 | Washington, DC*

*by*

*Howard Gruenspecht, Acting Administrator*

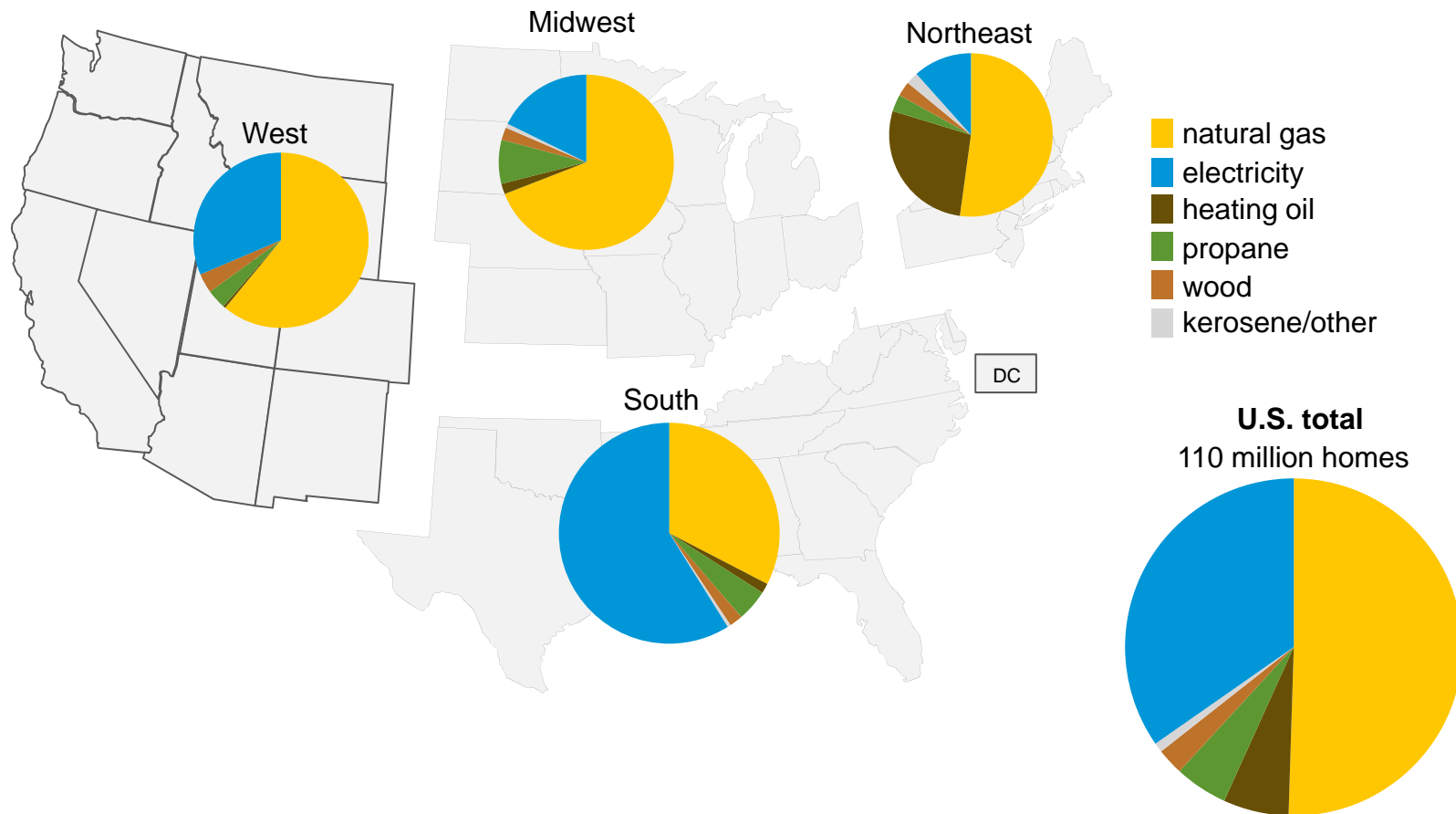


U.S. Energy Information Administration

*Independent Statistics & Analysis* | [www.eia.gov](http://www.eia.gov)

# Balance of heating fuels varies regionally

Number of homes by primary space heating fuel and Census Region



Source: EIA Residential Energy Consumption Survey, 2009

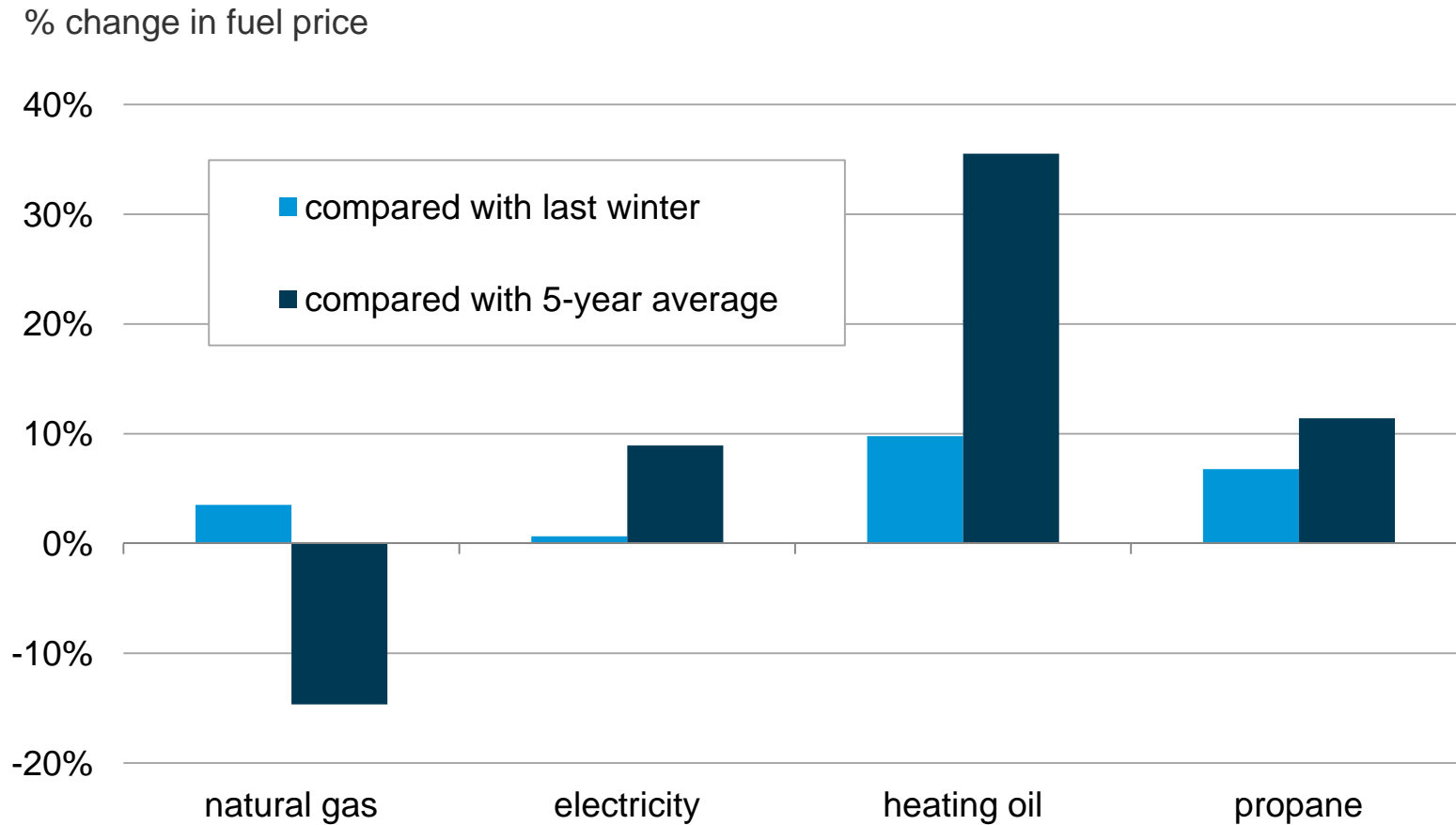
## Expenditures expected to increase this winter (October 1–March 31) for fossil fuels but not electricity

Percent change in fuel bills from last winter (forecast)

Fuel	Base case forecast	If 10% warmer than forecast	If 10% colder than forecast
Heating oil	<b>8</b>	-4	22
Natural gas	<b>3</b>	-5	10
Propane *	<b>7</b>	-	-
Electricity	<b>-1</b>	-3	5

\* Propane expenditures are a volume-weighted average of the Northeast and Midwest regions. All others are U.S. volume-weighted averages.

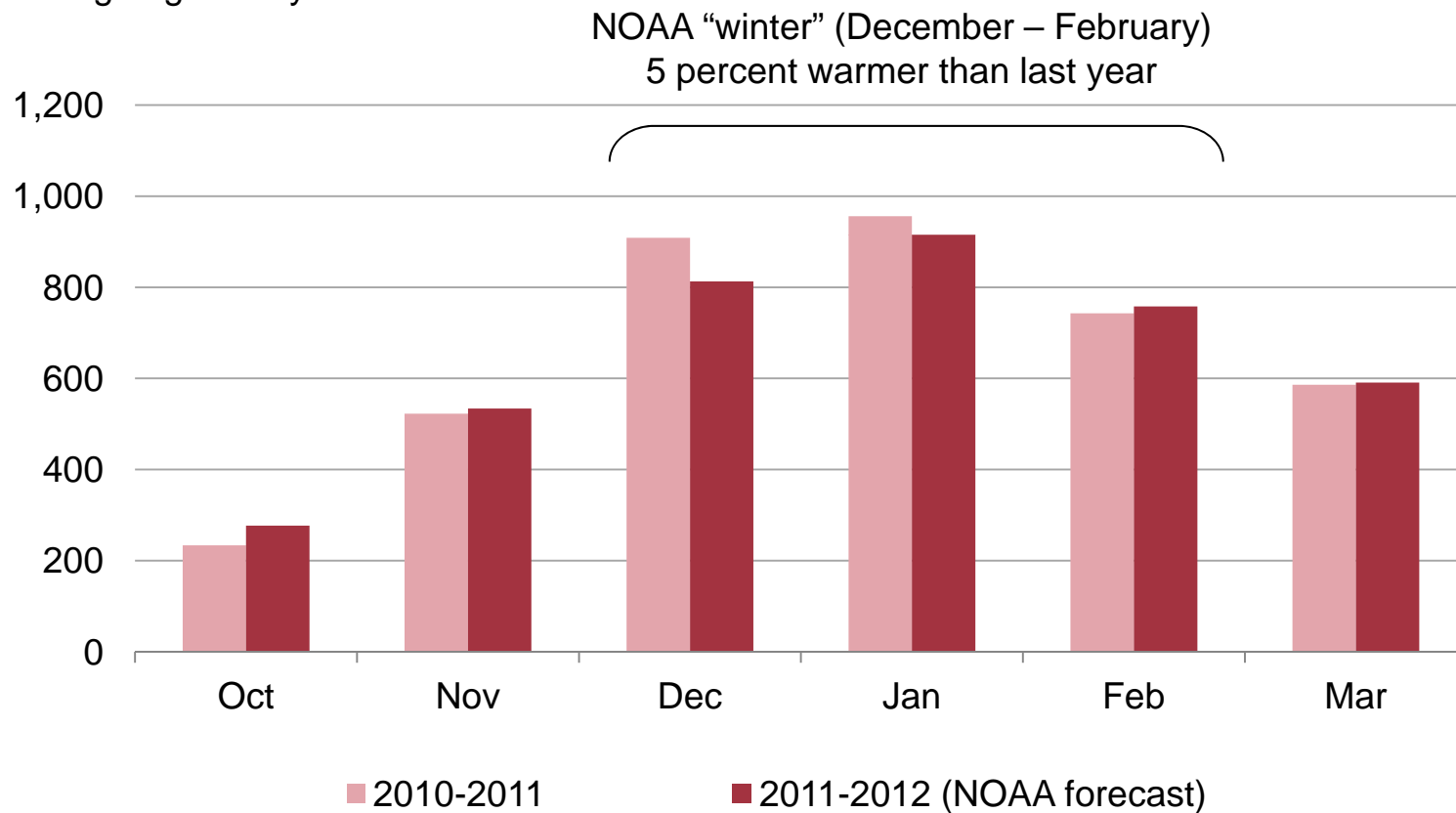
# Fuel prices increase this winter; natural gas remains lower than 2005-2010 average



Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011

# Winter 2011-12 heating season forecast is 2% warmer than last winter, close to the 30-year average

U.S. population-weighted heating degree-days

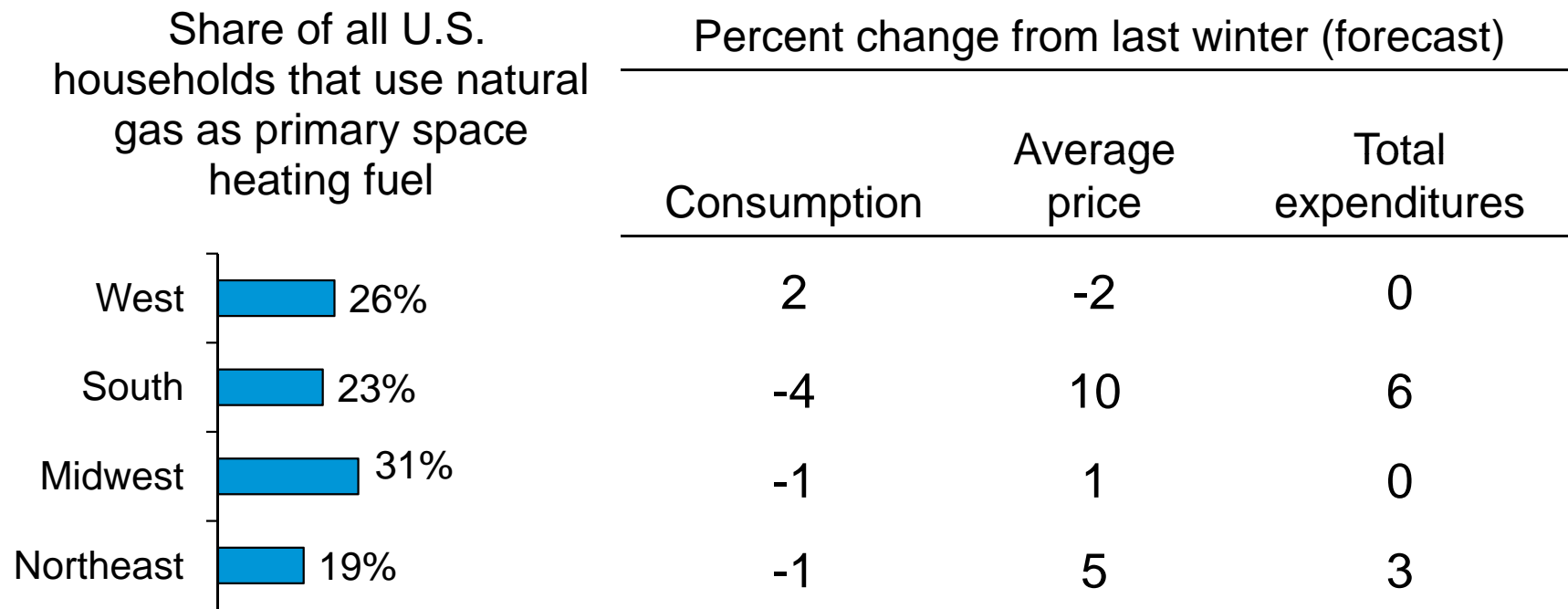


Source: NOAA (September 15, 2011)

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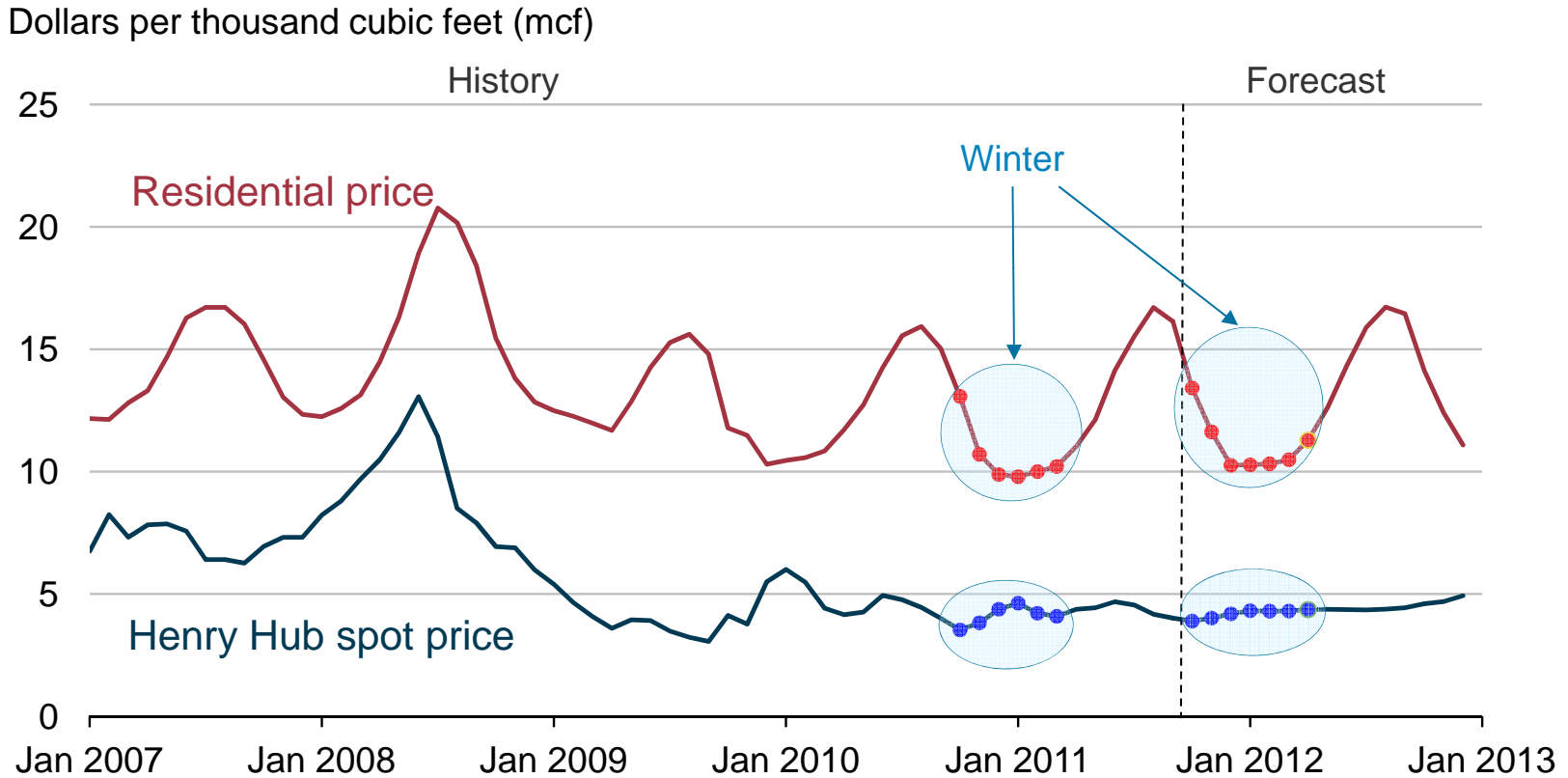
# Natural Gas

# Higher natural gas prices contribute to increase in average fuel bills in the South and Northeast this winter



Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011

# EIA expects residential natural gas prices to average about 4% higher this winter than last

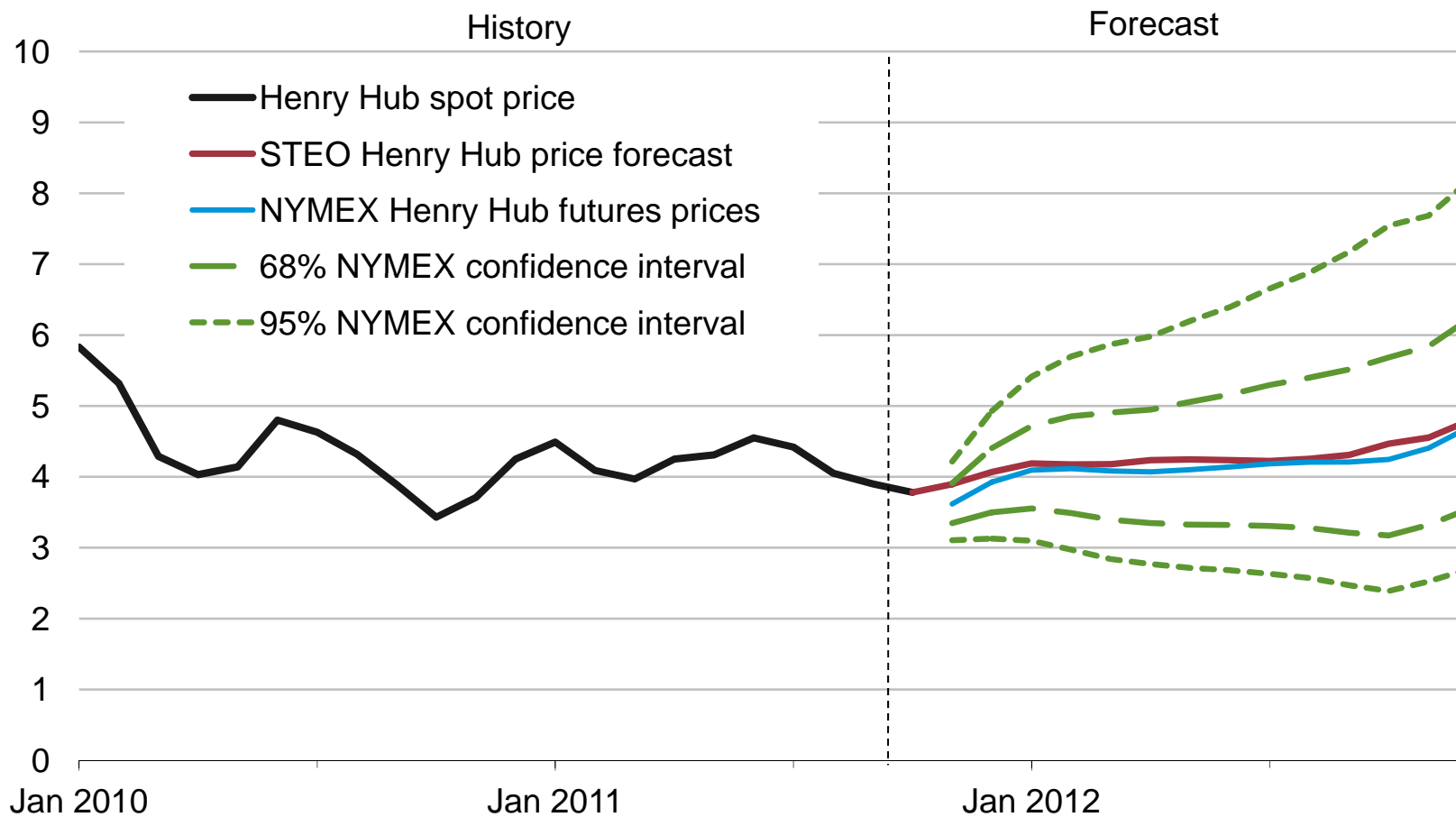


Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011



# Future natural gas prices remain highly uncertain

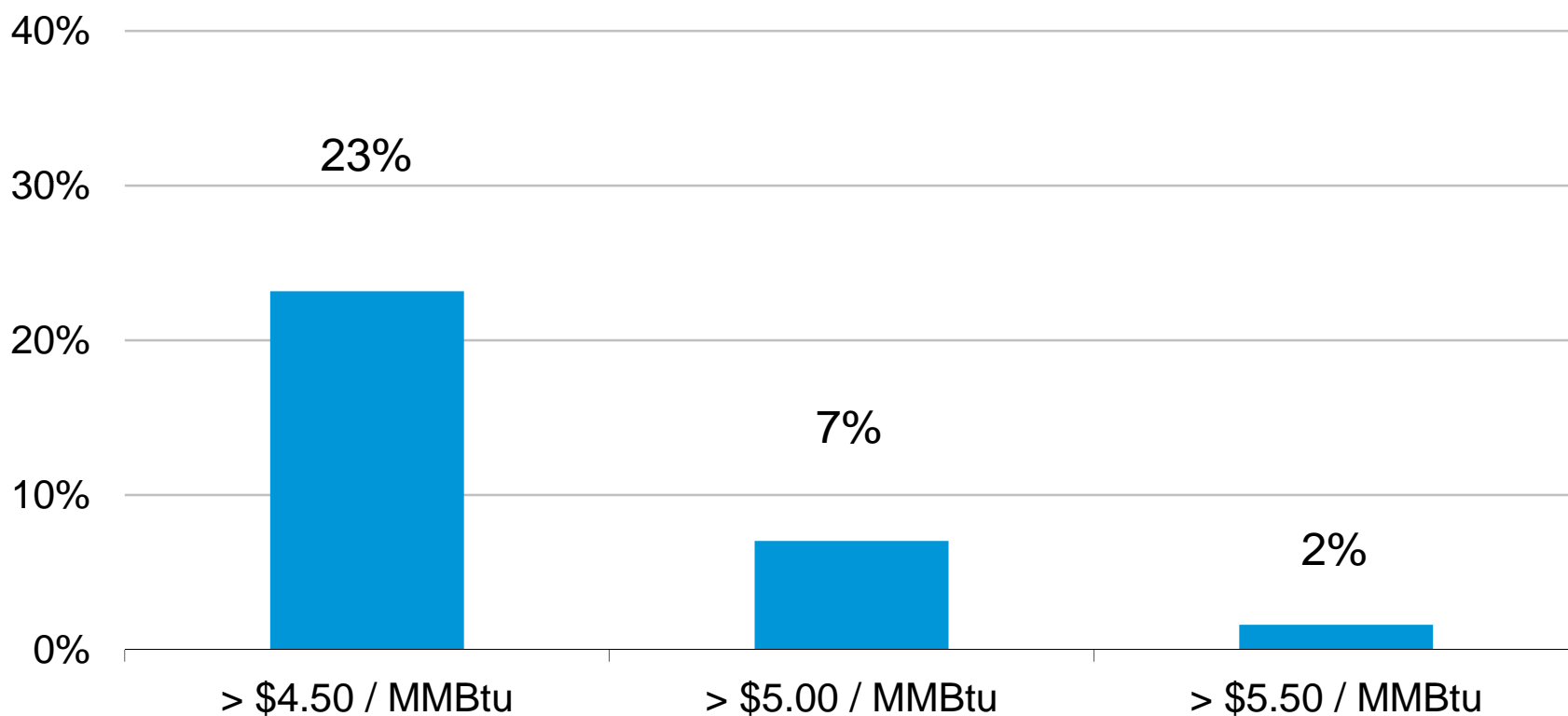
Dollars per million Btu



Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011; CME Group

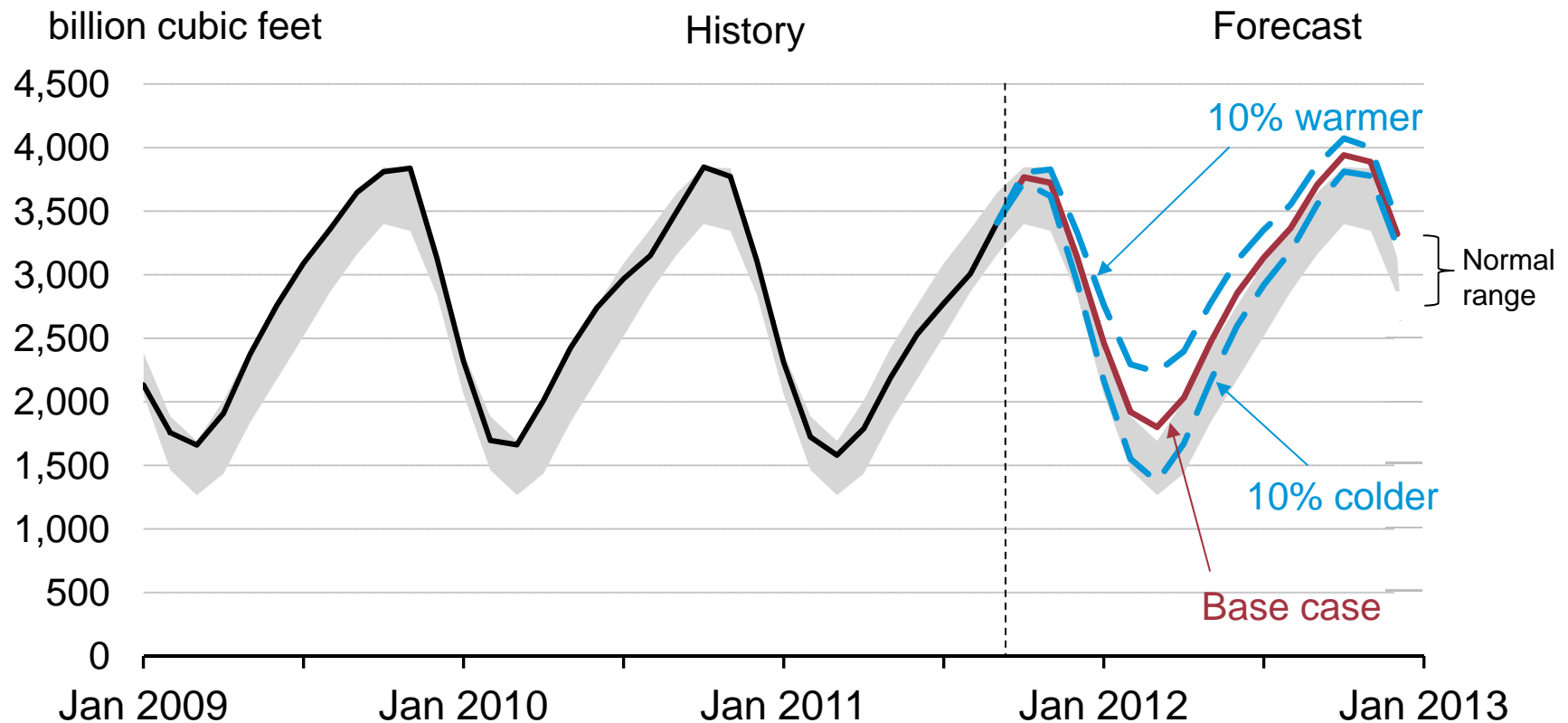
## The probability of the January 2012 contract month wholesale natural gas price being higher than \$5.50 per MMBtu is less than 2%

probability of exceedance



Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011, and CME Group

# EIA expects natural gas inventories to remain at high levels



Note: Normal range (colored band) represents the range between the minimum to maximum from Jan. 2006 to Dec. 2010.

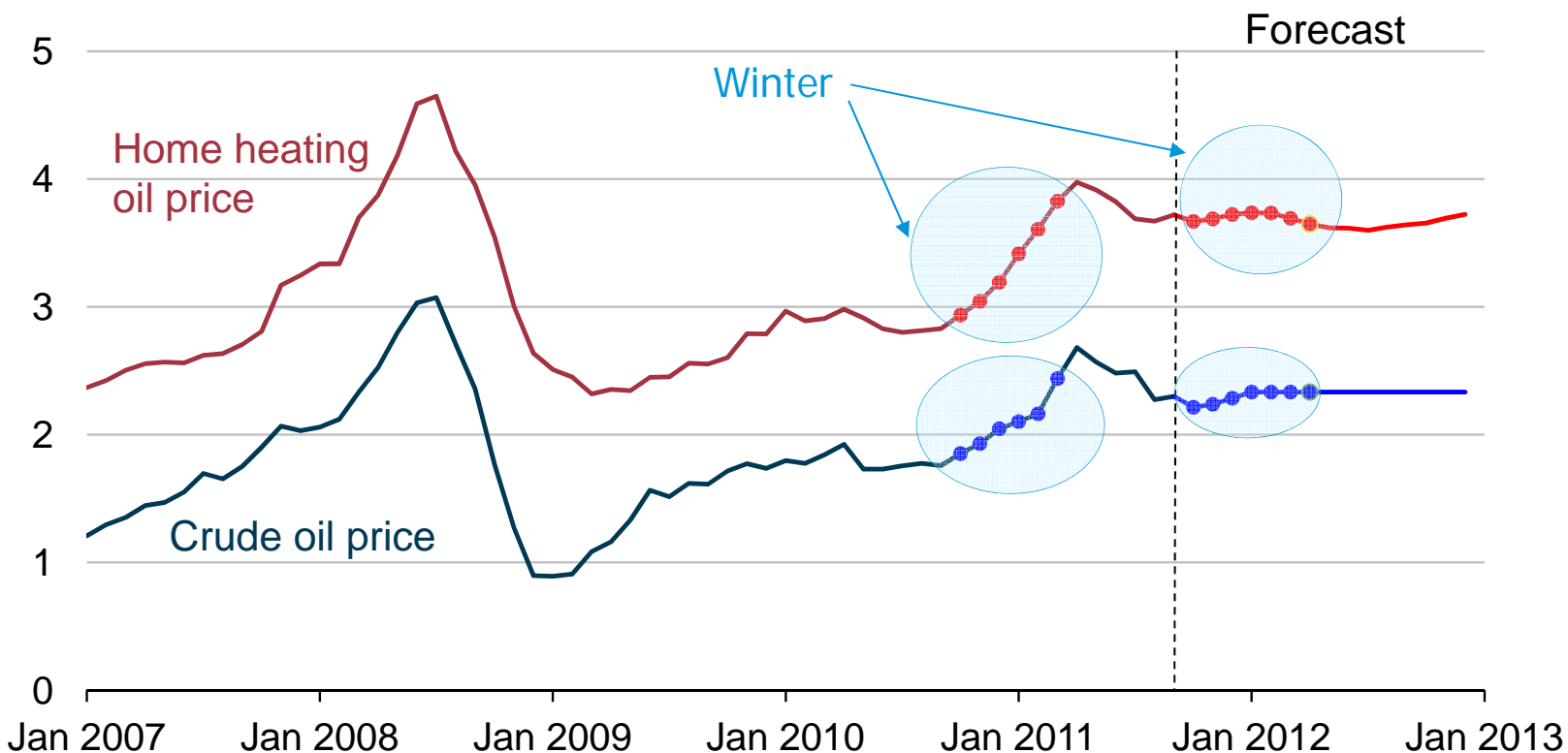
Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011

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# Heating Oil

# EIA expects residential heating oil prices to average 10% higher this winter than last

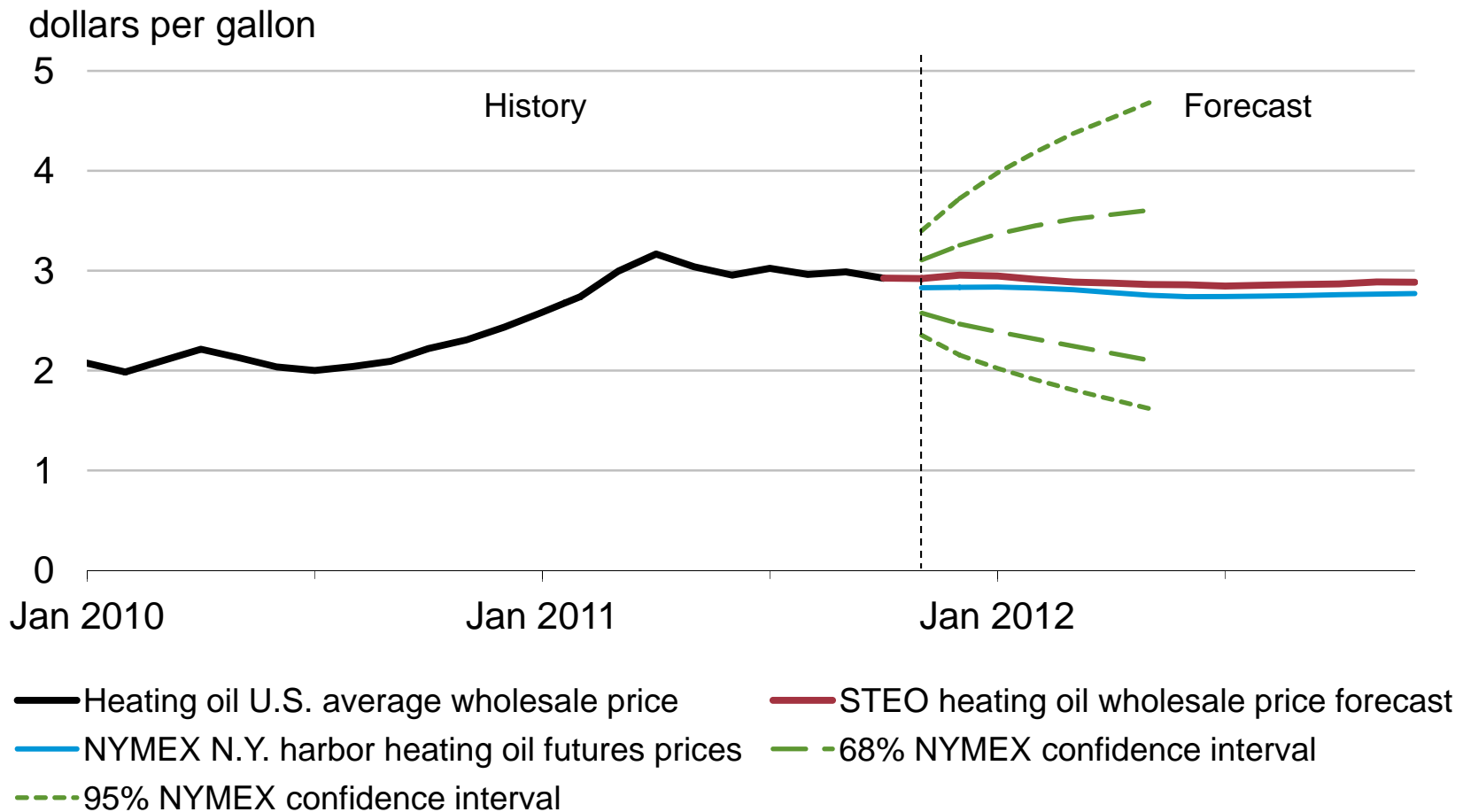
dollars per gallon



Crude oil price is average refiner acquisition cost. Retail price includes taxes.

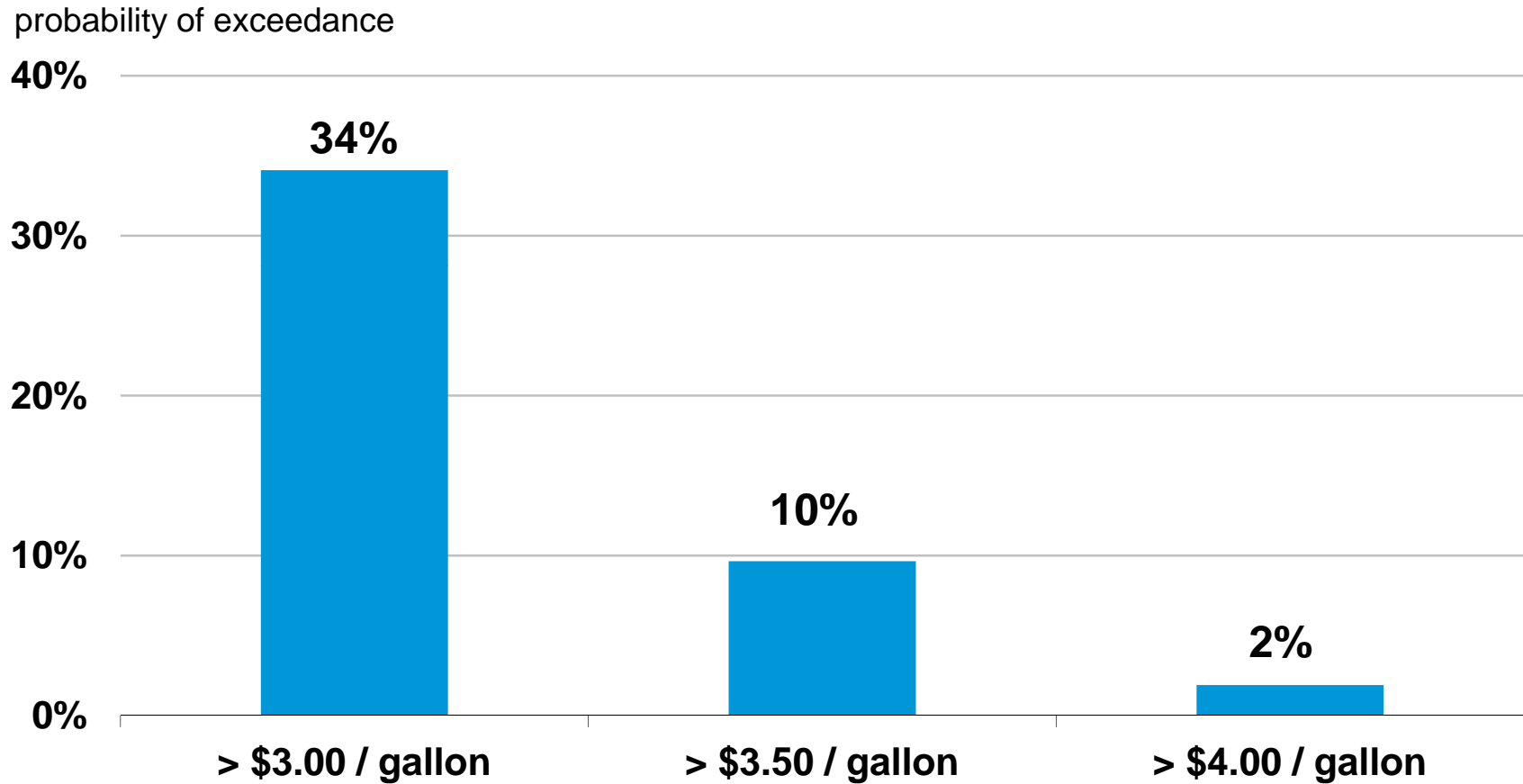
Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011

# Heating oil prices remain uncertain due to their dependence on crude oil prices



Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011, and CME Group

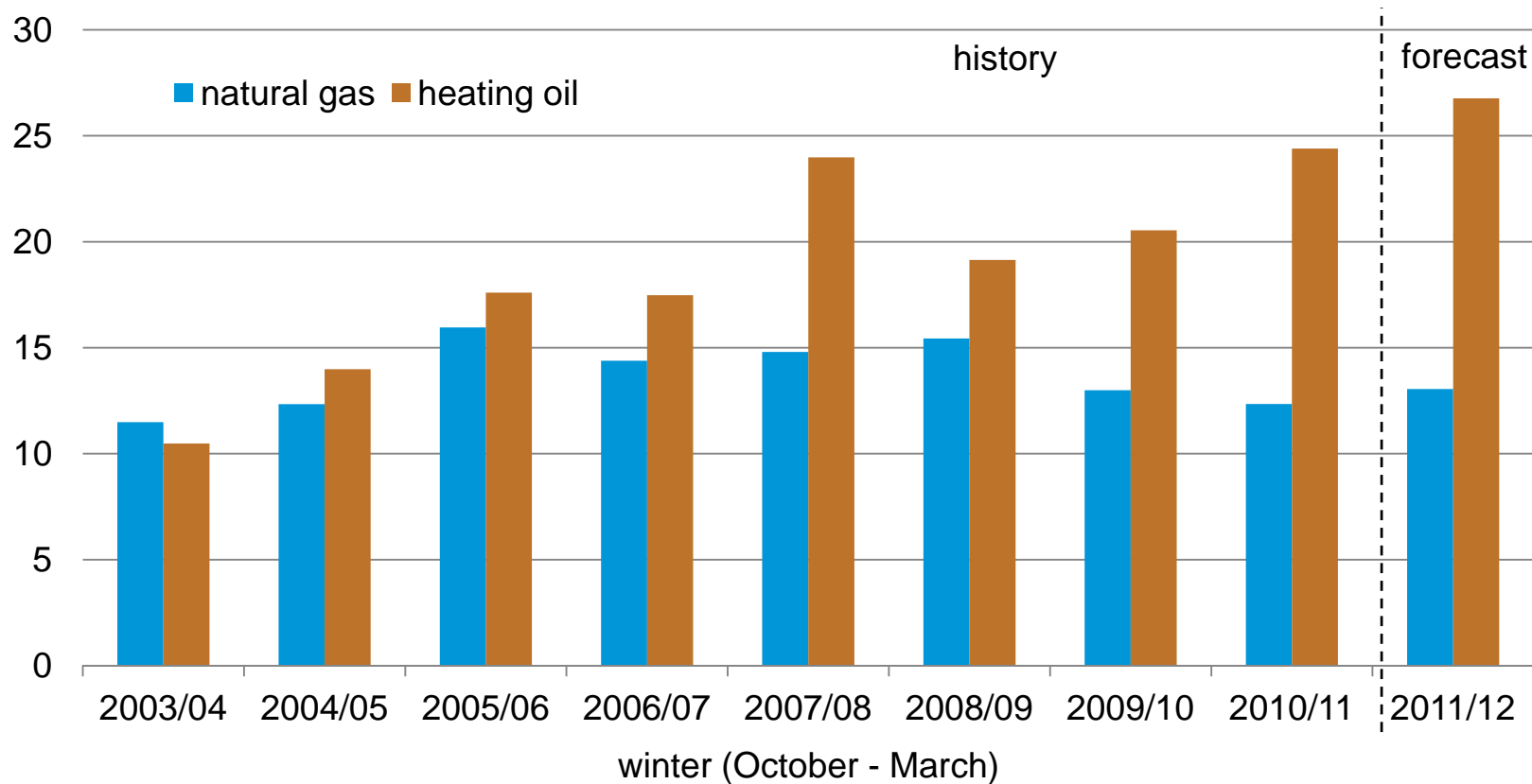
# The probability of January 2012 contract month wholesale heating oil price being higher than \$3.50 per gallon is less than 10%



Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011, and CME Group

# Winter heating fuel prices diverge in the Northeast; heating oil price up 10% over last winter

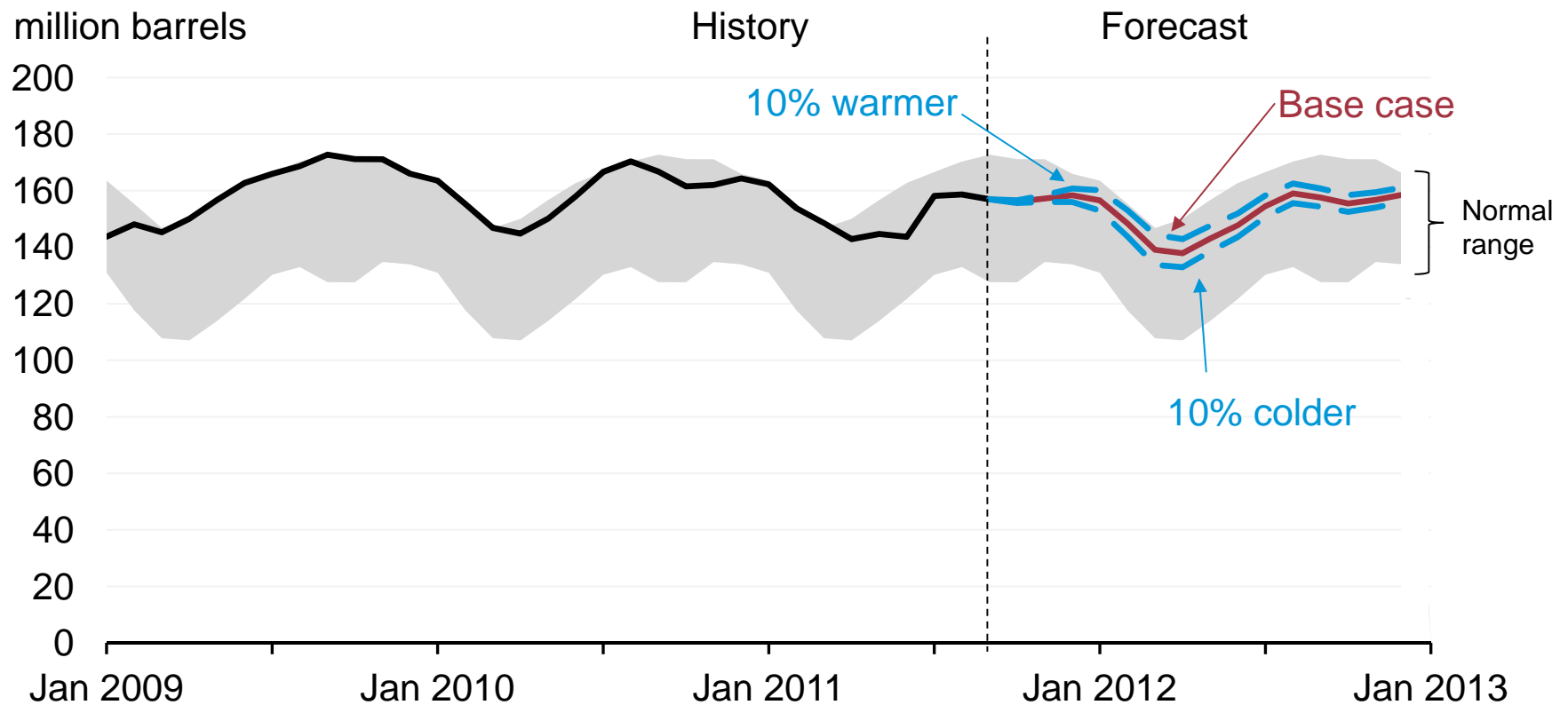
residential winter heating fuel prices, Northeast Census Region  
dollars per million Btu



Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011



# Going into winter, distillate inventories remain towards the upper end of their recent historical range

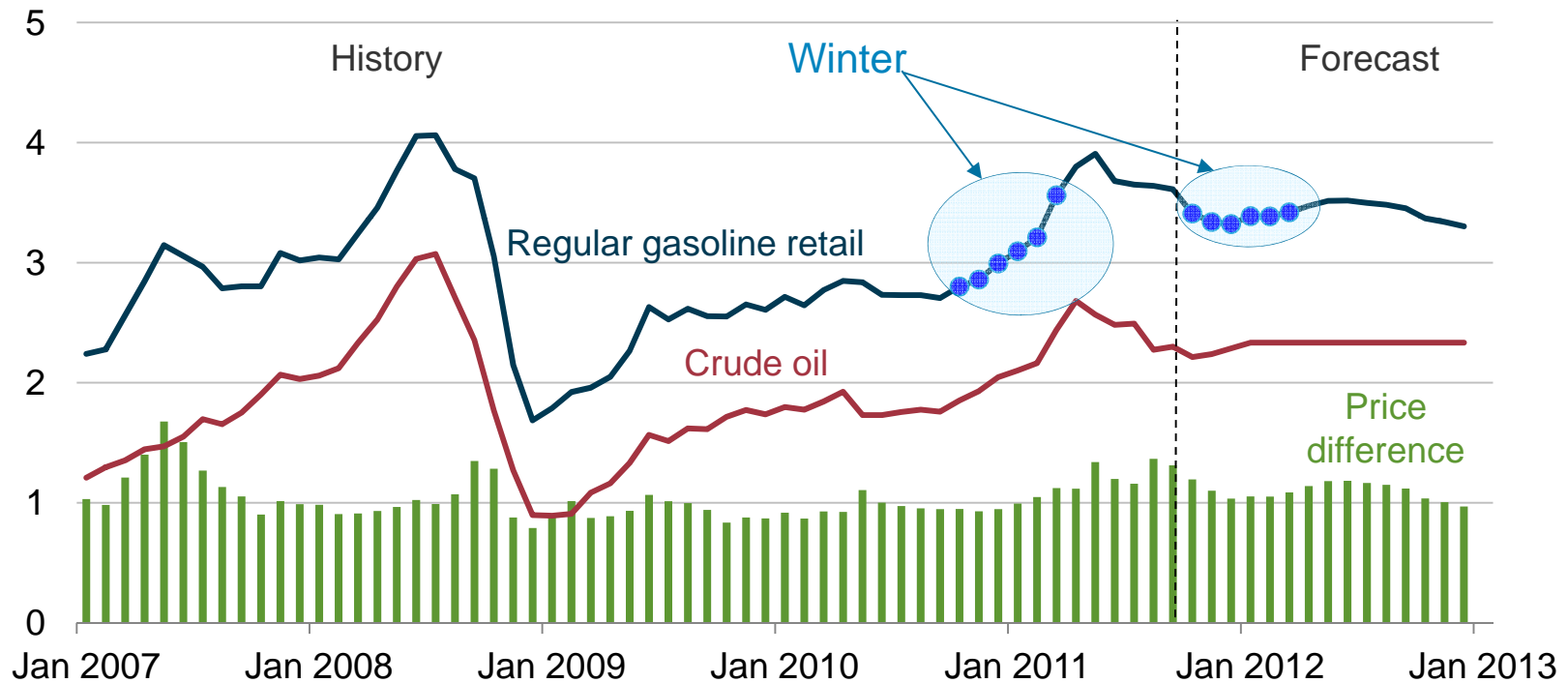


Note: Normal range (colored band) represents the range between the minimum to maximum from Jan. 2006 to Dec. 2010.

Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011

# EIA expects gasoline prices will track the cost of crude oil, with regular gasoline prices this winter averaging about 34 cents per gallon higher than last winter

Dollars per gallon



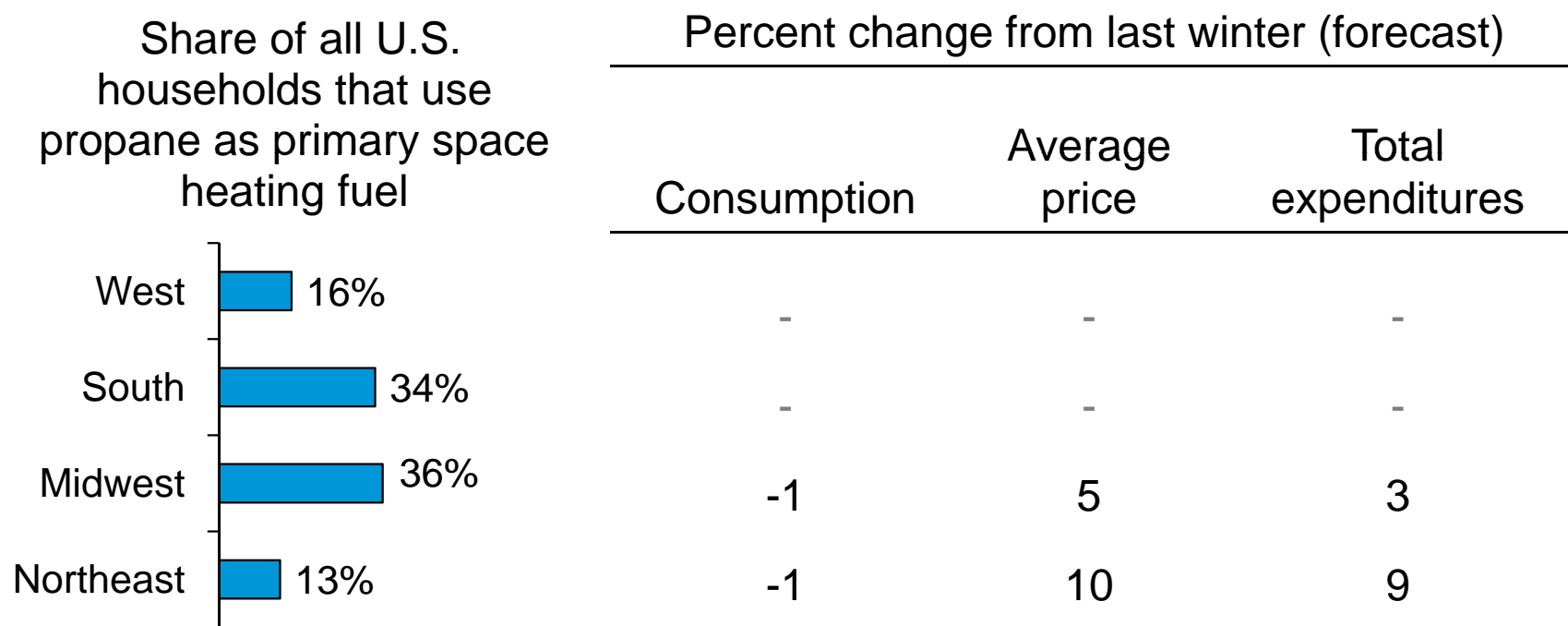
Crude oil price is refiner average acquisition cost. Retail price includes State and Federal taxes.

Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011

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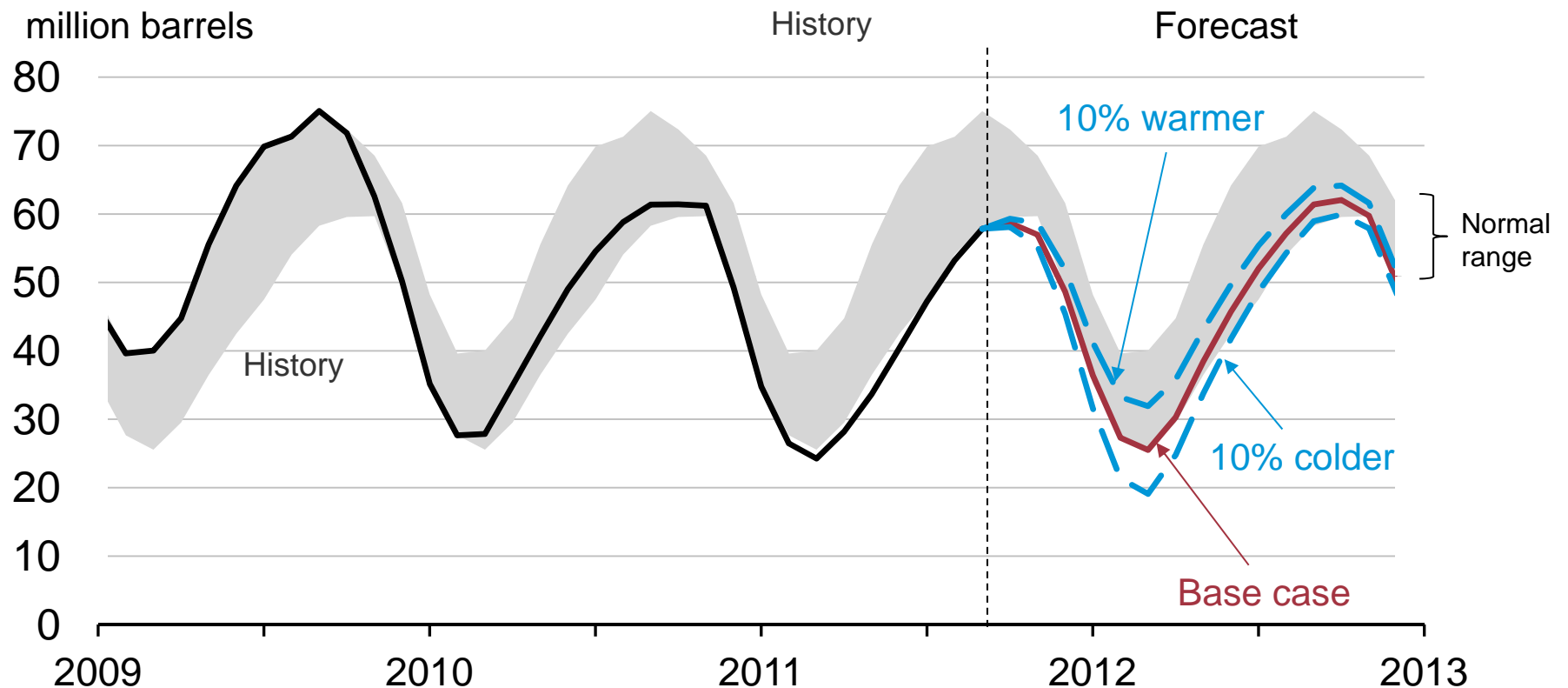
# Propane

## EIA forecasts higher residential propane prices in the Northeast and Midwest this winter



Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011

# Propane inventories remain at the low end of their recent historical range



Note: Normal range (colored band) represents the range between the minimum to maximum from Jan. 2006 to Dec. 2010.

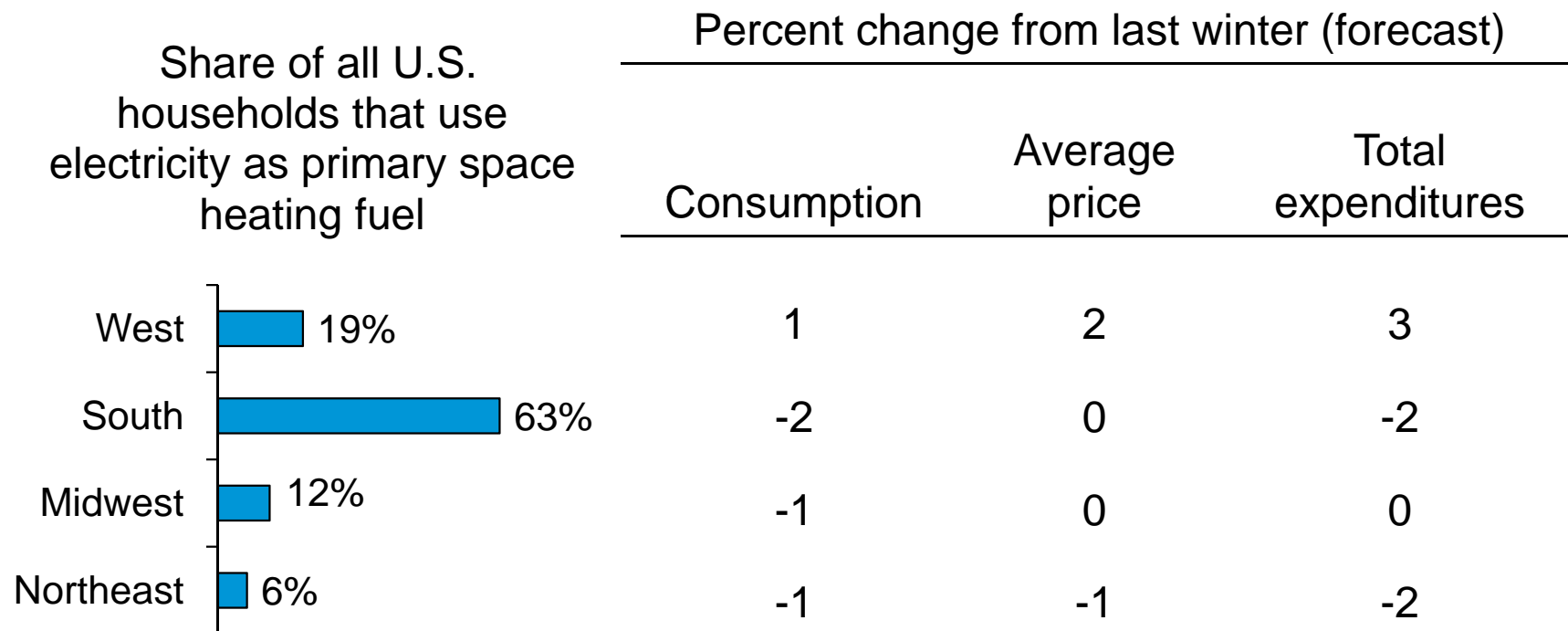
Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011

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# Electricity



# Winter electricity bill forecast shows little change from last winter



Source: EIA Short-Term Energy Outlook, October 2011

## For more information

U.S. Energy Information Administration home page | [www.eia.gov](http://www.eia.gov)

Short-Term Energy Outlook | [www.eia.gov/steo](http://www.eia.gov/steo)

Annual Energy Outlook | [www.eia.gov/aeo](http://www.eia.gov/aeo)

International Energy Outlook | [www.eia.gov/ieo](http://www.eia.gov/ieo)

Monthly Energy Review | [www.eia.gov/mer](http://www.eia.gov/mer)