BUSINESS

US consumer confidence slips in June

4th consecutive drop, as economic fears linger

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Americans can't seem to shake their uneasy feeling about the economy. Consumer confidence fell in June for the fourth month straight as lingering economic worries outweighed relief at the gas pump.

The Conference Board said Tuesday its Consumer Confidence Index is now at 62, down from 64.4 in May and the 63.2 analysts were expecting. The index is still well below the 90 reading indicatinh a healthy economy — a level it hasn't been near since the recession began in December 2007. But it's far from the all-time low of 25.3 hit in February 2009.

It's widely watched because consumer spending, including major items like health care, accounts for 70 percent of U.S. economic activity. Americans are still worried by slow hiring, home values, the stock market and a worsening European economy some fear will hurt the U.S.

"Consumers were somewhat more positive about current conditions but slightly more pessimistic about the short-term outlook," said Lynn Franco, director of Economic Indicators at The Conference Board. "If this trend continues, spending may be restrained in the short term."



A shopper looks at a microwave oven at a Lowe's store in Atlanta. Consumer confidence fell in June for the fourth month straight. D.GOLDMAN/AP

Job and income growth were big concerns in the survey, based on a poll conducted June 1-14 with about 500 randomly selected people nationwide.