



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Pricey Tank of Gas Leads to Million-Dollar Scratchers® Shock for San Diego County Lottery Player!

SEVEN Additional Winners Also Celebrating Becoming Instant Millionaires

SACRAMENTO – Talk about relief at the pump! Alfredo Mendez knew he needed to stop and fuel up to get to work – not exactly a pleasant experience for most Californians, unless, of course, you drive away an instant Lottery millionaire!



Mendez was at first completely unaware the [50X Fortune](#) Scratchers ticket he bought at a San Diego County gas station was a \$1 million winner.

"I had no idea! I didn't scratch it until later," Mendez said with a big laugh. "I drove off not knowing!"

Mendez bought the game at an ampm station (1403 South Santa Fe Avenue) in Vista (San Diego County). Any disbelief about how much he had to fork over for gas would soon morph into a very different kind of disbelief.

"I was in the dark until I stopped to get some food!" Mendez said, still laughing. While he waited for his order, he started scratching. And that is how he finally learned he was suddenly very rich!

"I was thinking it was a joke or something. I was like, 'No way! Hold on!'" Mendez recalled. "I really thought it was a prank until I scanned it on the (California Lottery) app and it turned green and said the amount. I thought it was a fake."

The fact that Mendez said it was a spur-of-the-moment decision to buy the ticket makes this win even more remarkable.

Pain at the pump? That's no longer going to be a concern for this dad. "This is going to change our lives. I just want to focus on trying to buy a house for my kids. We've been renting so long. It would be a dream to finally have a place of our own."

Mendez isn't the only new millionaire celebrating. The California Lottery has declared the following players among the state's newest millionaires:

BAY AREA

Arely Ortiz won a whopping **\$5,000,000** top prize playing the [\\$5,000,000 Extreme Cash](#) Scratchers game. Ortiz bought her lucky ticket at a Chevron station (296 North Fair Oaks Avenue) in **Sunnyvale**.

Santokh Singh won **\$1,000,000** playing a [50X Fortune](#) Scratchers. He bought his lucky ticket at S&B Stanley Shell (809 East Stanley Boulevard) in **Livermore**.

CENTRAL VALLEY / COAST

Maritza Del Carmen Aviles Garcia won **\$2,000,000** after buying a lucky [Instant Prize Crossword](#) Scratchers. She bought her lucky ticket at a 7-Eleven store (1212 Fremont Avenue) in **Seaside**.

Jose Estrada Martinez won **\$1,000,000** playing a [Gold Rush](#) Scratchers. He bought his lucky ticket at BMF Racing Co. (250 San Benito Street) in **Hollister**.

Juan Rojas is another **\$1,000,000** winner, playing a [50X Fortune](#) Scratchers. He bought his lucky ticket at Selma Valero Gas Station (10610 East Mountain View Avenue) in **Selma**.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Jason Brody is yet another player who became **\$1,000,000** richer playing that lucky [50X Fortune](#) Scratchers game. He bought his lucky ticket at Chumash Gas Station (990 Edison Street) in **Santa Ynez**.

Wilbur Staton Jr. won **\$1,000,000** playing a [Gold Rush](#) Scratchers. He bought his lucky ticket at the Pilot Travel Center Gas Station (2591 Commerce Parkway) in **Barstow**.

Every dollar spent on Lottery games supports California's public schools. The public can use [this map tool on the Lottery's website](#) to see how much money local schools have received from Lottery funds.

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The California Lottery's mission is to provide supplemental funding to California public schools, including kindergarten and grades 1-12, community colleges, the California State University, the University of California, and other California public educational entities. The funds the Lottery transferred to public education totaled more than \$1.8 billion for fiscal year 2020-21, which amounted to a modest percentage of education's overall budget. However, this funding is largely discretionary, meaning schools can use this for important, yet unfunded instructional programs they would otherwise not afford. During the same period, the Lottery generated almost \$8.4 billion in sales, more than 95% of which went back to the community in the form of prize payments, retailer commissions and bonuses, and contributions to education.

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