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MID-ATLANTIC INFORMATION OFFICE: Philadelphia, Pa.
Technical information: (215) 597-3282 BLSInfoPhiladelphia@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic
Media contact: (215) 861-5600 BLSMediaPhiladelphia@bls.gov

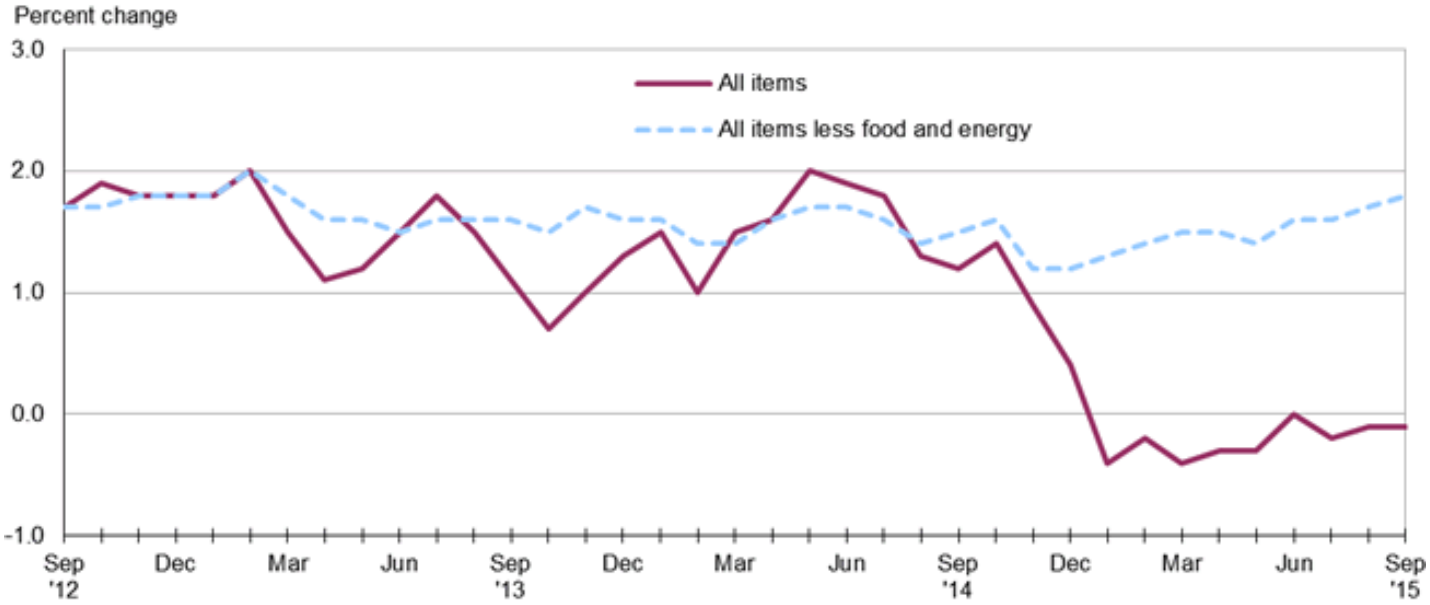
Consumer Price Index, Northeast Region – September 2015

Regional prices unchanged over the month, down 0.1 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Northeast was unchanged in September, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that a 4.1-percent decrease in the energy index was offset by increases in both the all items less food and energy index (0.4 percent) and the food index (0.2 percent). (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the Northeast all items CPI-U inched down 0.1 percent. (See chart 1 and table A.) The energy index fell 19.7 percent over the year, while the all items less food and energy index increased 1.8 percent. Food prices also advanced from September 2014, up 1.4 percent. (See table 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Northeast region, September 2012–September 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

The food index edged up 0.2 percent since August. Food away from home prices increased 0.4 percent over the month and food at home prices inched up 0.1 percent.

From September 2014 to September 2015, the food index increased 1.4 percent. Prices for food away from home rose 2.2 percent over the year and those for food at home increased 0.9 percent.

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, decreased 4.1 percent since August. This was mostly due to an 8.7-percent drop in gasoline prices. Electricity and utility (piped) gas service prices also decreased over the month, down 0.2 and 0.3 percent, respectively.

The energy index fell 19.7 percent since September 2014, mostly due to a 31.5-percent drop in gasoline prices. Prices for utility (piped) gas service also dropped, down 12.8 percent, while electricity prices increased 1.6 percent over the year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.4 percent in September, led by a 0.4-percent increase in shelter prices. Apparel prices recorded a seasonal advance of 2.5 percent and prices for education and communication were up 1.0 percent, which was the largest one-month increase in this index since August 2009.

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy increased 1.8 percent, led by higher prices for shelter (2.8 percent). Prices were also higher for several other categories including medical care and education and communication, up 2.6 and 1.4 percent, respectively. Household furnishings and operations prices were down 1.1 percent over the year.

Table A. Northeast region CPI-U 1-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month
January	0.4	1.6	0.4	2.9	0.3	1.8	0.6	1.5	-0.2	-0.4
February	0.5	2.0	0.4	2.8	0.6	2.0	0.1	1.0	0.2	-0.2
March	0.8	2.5	0.5	2.5	0.0	1.5	0.5	1.5	0.3	-0.4
April	0.5	2.8	0.3	2.3	-0.1	1.1	0.0	1.6	0.1	-0.3
May	0.5	3.2	-0.1	1.7	0.0	1.2	0.4	2.0	0.4	-0.3
June	0.1	3.4	-0.2	1.5	0.1	1.5	0.0	1.9	0.3	0.0
July	0.2	3.6	-0.1	1.1	0.2	1.8	0.1	1.8	-0.1	-0.2
August	0.3	3.8	0.5	1.3	0.2	1.5	-0.3	1.3	-0.2	-0.1
September	0.1	4.0	0.5	1.7	0.1	1.1	0.0	1.2	0.0	-0.1
October	-0.1	3.6	0.1	1.9	-0.4	0.7	-0.2	1.4		
November	-0.1	3.2	-0.2	1.8	0.1	1.0	-0.4	0.9		
December	-0.3	2.9	-0.3	1.8	0.0	1.3	-0.5	0.4		

The Consumer Price Index for October 2015 is scheduled to be released Tuesday, November 17, 2015, at 8:30 a.m. (ET).

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 89 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 28 percent of the

total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 87 urban areas across the country from about 4,000 housing units and approximately 26,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from $10 in 1982-84 to $11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch17_a.htm.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **Note: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The Northeast region is comprised of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Northeast Region, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jul. 2015	Aug. 2015	Sep. 2015	Sep. 2014	Jul. 2015	Aug. 2015
All items		253.405	252.903	252.922	-0.1	-0.2	0.0
All items (December 1977 = 100)		399.036	398.245	398.275			
Food and beverages		251.840	252.060	252.559	1.3	0.3	0.2
Food		251.901	252.149	252.707	1.4	0.3	0.2
Food at home		248.520	249.021	249.251	0.9	0.3	0.1
Food away from home		260.058	259.933	260.986	2.2	0.4	0.4
Alcoholic beverages		249.866	249.726	249.465	0.4	-0.2	-0.1
Housing		265.298	264.975	265.767	1.4	0.2	0.3
Shelter		326.169	326.509	327.736	2.8	0.5	0.4
Rent of primary residence [1]		325.712	326.086	328.146	3.0	0.7	0.6
Owners' equivalent rent of residences [1] [2]		336.328	337.290	338.861	2.6	0.8	0.5
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence [1] [2]		336.093	337.060	338.611	2.6	0.7	0.5
Fuels and utilities		211.630	208.839	208.285	-6.0	-1.6	-0.3
Household energy		188.157	184.901	184.239	-7.5	-2.1	-0.4
Energy services [1]		186.405	185.115	184.686	-2.2	-0.9	-0.2
Electricity [1]		199.371	198.006	197.596	1.6	-0.9	-0.2
Utility (piped) gas service [1]		145.439	144.401	143.950	-12.8	-1.0	-0.3
Household furnishings and operations		123.309	122.483	122.855	-1.1	-0.4	0.3
Apparel		127.487	131.766	135.089	0.6	6.0	2.5
Transportation		205.526	201.447	197.063	-8.8	-4.1	-2.2
Private transportation		197.234	193.503	188.944	-9.5	-4.2	-2.4
New and used motor vehicles [3]		98.570	98.407	98.191	-0.3	-0.4	-0.2
New vehicles		145.426	145.295	145.681	1.1	0.2	0.3
New cars and trucks [3] [4]		100.785	100.687	100.955	1.2	0.2	0.3
New cars [4]		138.026	138.007	137.675	0.7	-0.3	-0.2
Used cars and trucks		158.635	158.308	155.663	-2.0	-1.9	-1.7
Motor fuel		232.454	217.280	198.489	-31.5	-14.6	-8.6
Gasoline (all types)		231.550	216.425	197.630	-31.5	-14.6	-8.7
Gasoline, unleaded regular [4]		230.488	214.499	194.913	-32.5	-15.4	-9.1
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade [4] [5]		241.197	228.398	211.909	-28.7	-12.1	-7.2
Gasoline, unleaded premium [4]		232.948	222.643	208.779	-26.3	-10.4	-6.2
Medical care		467.511	468.451	469.086	2.6	0.3	0.1
Medical care commodities		378.456	379.329	375.944	0.8	-0.7	-0.9
Medical care services		492.142	493.092	495.109	3.1	0.6	0.4
Professional services		362.496	363.222	363.152	2.5	0.2	0.0
Recreation [3]		121.488	120.955	120.700	1.1	-0.6	-0.2
Education and communication [3]		138.709	139.296	140.674	1.4	1.4	1.0
Other goods and services		452.456	452.607	452.607	2.4	0.0	0.0
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		189.427	188.337	187.271	-4.1	-1.1	-0.6
Commodities less food and beverages		154.801	153.193	151.497	-7.7	-2.1	-1.1
Nondurables less food and beverages		195.785	193.123	189.688	-11.5	-3.1	-1.8
Durables		107.682	107.112	107.057	-1.0	-0.6	-0.1

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Northeast Region, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jul. 2015	Aug. 2015	Sep. 2015	Sep. 2014	Jul. 2015	Aug. 2015
Services		315.601	315.622	316.624	2.2	0.3	0.3
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter		228.601	227.776	227.339	-1.6	-0.6	-0.2
All items less medical care		243.991	243.430	243.424	-0.3	-0.2	0.0
Commodities less food		158.298	156.728	155.069	-7.3	-2.0	-1.1
Nondurables		223.943	222.625	221.026	-5.0	-1.3	-0.7
Nondurables less food		198.916	196.408	193.166	-10.7	-2.9	-1.7
Services less rent of shelter [2]		315.230	314.888	315.697	1.5	0.1	0.3
Services less medical care services		303.362	303.327	304.262	2.1	0.3	0.3
Energy		206.809	198.583	190.364	-19.7	-8.0	-4.1
All items less energy		260.691	260.984	261.856	1.8	0.4	0.3
All items less food and energy		263.941	264.244	265.178	1.8	0.5	0.4

Footnotes
(1) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.
(2) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.
(3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.
(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.
Note: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.