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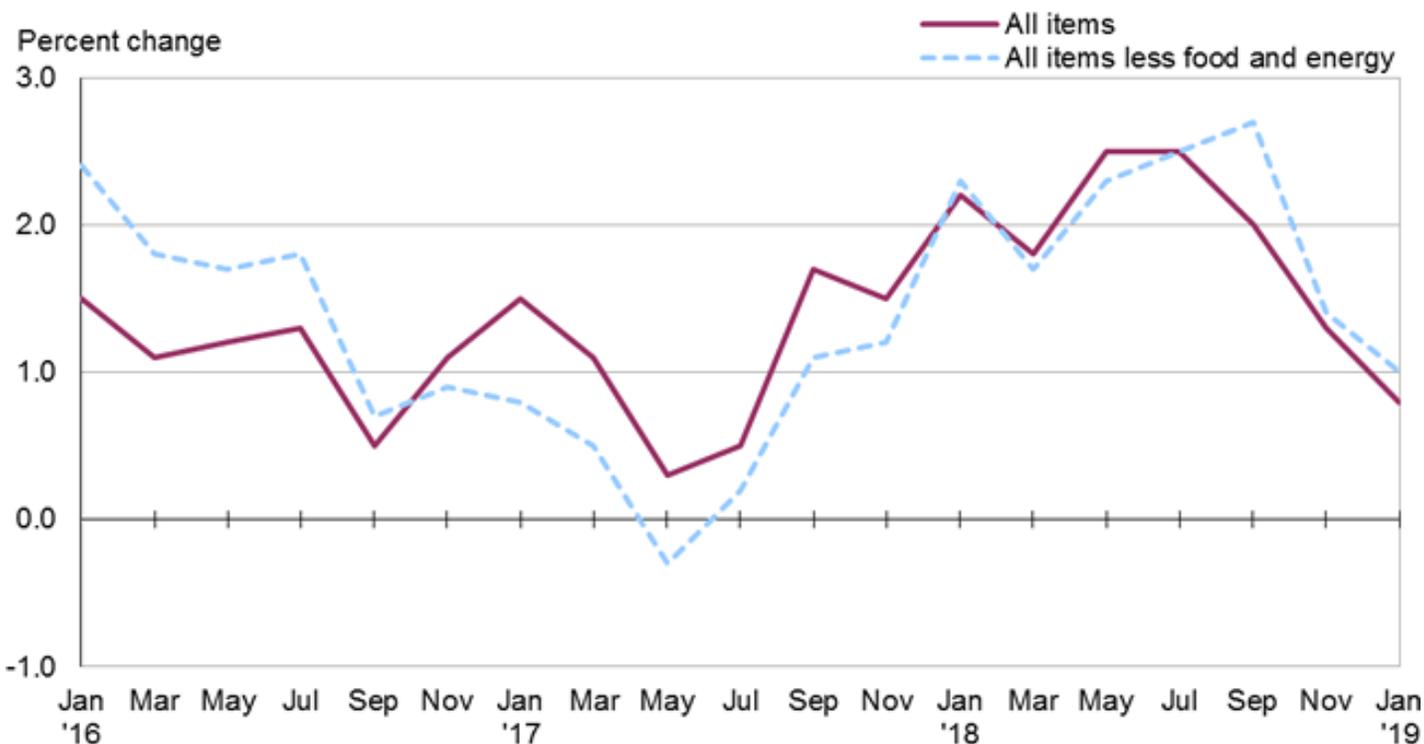
Consumer Price Index, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria – January 2019

Area prices up 0.5 percent since November, 0.8 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria increased 0.5 percent from November to January, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau’s regional commissioner, noted that the recent increase was due mainly to a 0.6-percent rise in the all items less food and energy index. The food index also increased since November, up 1.6 percent, while the energy index declined 3.5 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 CPI-U advanced 0.8 percent, primarily reflecting a 1.0-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A.](#)) Since January 2018, the food index also advanced, up 2.0 percent, while the energy index decreased 4.1 percent. (See [table 1.](#))

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, January 2016–January 2019



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

After a 0.1-percent increase from September to November, the food index rose 1.6 percent over the last two months. Prices for food at home were up 2.8 percent, and those for food away from home inched up 0.1 percent. Within the food at home component, prices were higher for items such as carbonated drinks; canned fruits and vegetables; and pasta, rice, and cornmeal over the last two months.

Food prices increased 2.0 percent over the year. Prices were higher for both food at home (2.7 percent) and food away from home (1.2 percent) since January 2018.

Energy

Since November, the energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, decreased 3.5 percent, due to an 11.5-percent decrease in gasoline prices. Prices were higher for utility (piped) gas service (21.1 percent) and electricity (0.9 percent).

Energy prices declined 4.1 percent since January 2018. Declines for both gasoline prices (-9.1 percent) and electricity prices (-0.8 percent) led the decrease, while prices for utility (piped) gas service increased 6.2 percent.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.6 percent since November. An increase in household furnishings and operations prices (6.2 percent) and recreation prices (3.2 percent) led the increase in the all items less food and energy index. Prices were also higher for apparel (2.2 percent). Prices were lower for education and communication, down 0.7 percent from November to January.

Since January 2018, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.0 percent. The advance was led by higher prices for shelter (1.3 percent); household furnishings and operations (5.2 percent) and apparel (3.2 percent) were among the other indexes that had increases over the year.

Table A. Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	2-month	12-month								
January.....	-1.1	-0.2	-0.2	1.5	0.2	1.5	0.9	2.2	0.5	0.8
March.....	1.2	0.2	0.8	1.1	0.4	1.1	-0.1	1.8		
May.....	0.7	0.6	0.8	1.2	0.0	0.3	0.7	2.5		
July.....	-0.3	0.3	-0.2	1.3	0.0	0.5	0.1	2.5		
September.....	0.6	0.7	-0.3	0.5	0.9	1.7	0.4	2.0		
November.....	-0.4	0.5	0.2	1.1	0.0	1.5	-0.7	1.3		

The Consumer Price Index for March 2019 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, April 10, 2019, at 8:30 a.m. (EDT).

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria is published bi-monthly. 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 94 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 75 urban areas across the country from about 5,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 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/pdf/homch17.pdf.

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 **Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MA-WV, Core Based Statistical Area** includes the District of Columbia; the counties of Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's in Maryland; the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas, and Manassas Park and the counties of Arlington, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren in Virginia; and the county of Jefferson in West Virginia.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Nov. 2018	Dec. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2018	Nov. 2018	Dec. 2018
All items.....		261.120		262.304	0.8	0.5	
Food and beverages		248.224		252.121	2.0	1.6	
Food		252.996		256.943	2.0	1.6	
Food at home		239.973	242.685	246.786	2.7	2.8	1.7
Cereals and bakery products		316.939		323.874	2.5	2.2	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		255.519		261.827	2.3	2.5	
Dairy and related products		233.161		237.199	-0.5	1.7	
Fruits and vegetables		263.213		269.271	0.3	2.3	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)		204.193		225.757	10.8	10.6	
Other food at home		199.176		200.629	2.3	0.7	
Food away from home.....		270.445		270.709	1.2	0.1	
Alcoholic beverages		202.159		205.579	2.0	1.7	
Housing		272.186		275.197	1.7	1.1	
Shelter		330.214	329.310	330.803	1.3	0.2	0.5
Rent of primary residence		361.400	362.426	362.750	1.6	0.4	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....		337.752	337.304	338.359	1.4	0.2	0.3
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)		337.752	337.304	338.359	1.4	0.2	0.3
Fuels and utilities.....		224.116		233.631	1.4	4.2	
Household energy		173.765	178.483	183.262	1.0	5.5	2.7
Energy services.....		177.675	182.559	187.667	1.0	5.6	2.8
Electricity		206.331	206.736	208.230	-0.8	0.9	0.7
Utility (piped) gas service		114.885	127.722	139.178	6.2	21.1	9.0
Household furnishings and operations.....		103.211		109.574	5.2	6.2	
Apparel		165.956		169.674	3.2	2.2	
Transportation		216.747		209.645	-1.2	-3.3	
Private transportation		214.310		208.973	-1.1	-2.5	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....		93.968		94.272	2.0	0.3	
New vehicles(1).....		196.752		200.675	1.2	2.0	
Used cars and trucks(1)		294.430		296.017	1.8	0.5	
Motor fuel		244.078	225.738	216.226	-9.0	-11.4	-4.2
Gasoline (all types).....		241.155	222.903	213.410	-9.1	-11.5	-4.3
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		235.161	216.934	207.311	-9.6	-11.8	-4.4
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		243.624	227.870	221.012	-5.2	-9.3	-3.0
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		258.124	242.188	235.045	-5.4	-8.9	-2.9
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....		862.279		845.825	-2.4	-1.9	
Medical care		450.290		451.511	0.4	0.3	
Recreation(3).....		115.723		119.440	0.1	3.2	
Education and communication(3).....		150.041		149.002	-4.2	-0.7	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1).....		1,359.223		1,359.223	-1.3	0.0	
Other goods and services		411.772		411.709	1.7	0.0	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		179.184		180.758	0.8	0.9	

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, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Nov. 2018	Dec. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2018	Nov. 2018	Dec. 2018
Commodities less food and beverages		143.972		144.544	-0.1	0.4	
Nondurables less food and beverages...		193.781		190.720	-1.1	-1.6	
Durables		98.751		101.787	1.3	3.1	
Services.....		335.439		336.168	0.8	0.2	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		233.335		234.744	0.5	0.6	
All items less medical care		252.192		253.376	0.8	0.5	
Commodities less food		146.663		147.339	0.0	0.5	
Nondurables		220.189		220.507	0.6	0.1	
Nondurables less food.....		194.336		191.788	-0.9	-1.3	
Services less rent of shelter(2).....		352.510		353.458	0.2	0.3	
Services less medical care services.....		324.473		325.128	0.8	0.2	
Energy		208.559	202.878	201.242	-4.1	-3.5	-0.8
All items less energy		268.494		270.373	1.1	0.7	
All items less food and energy		272.545		274.058	1.0	0.6	

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a November 1977=100 base.
- (2) Indexes on a November 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.