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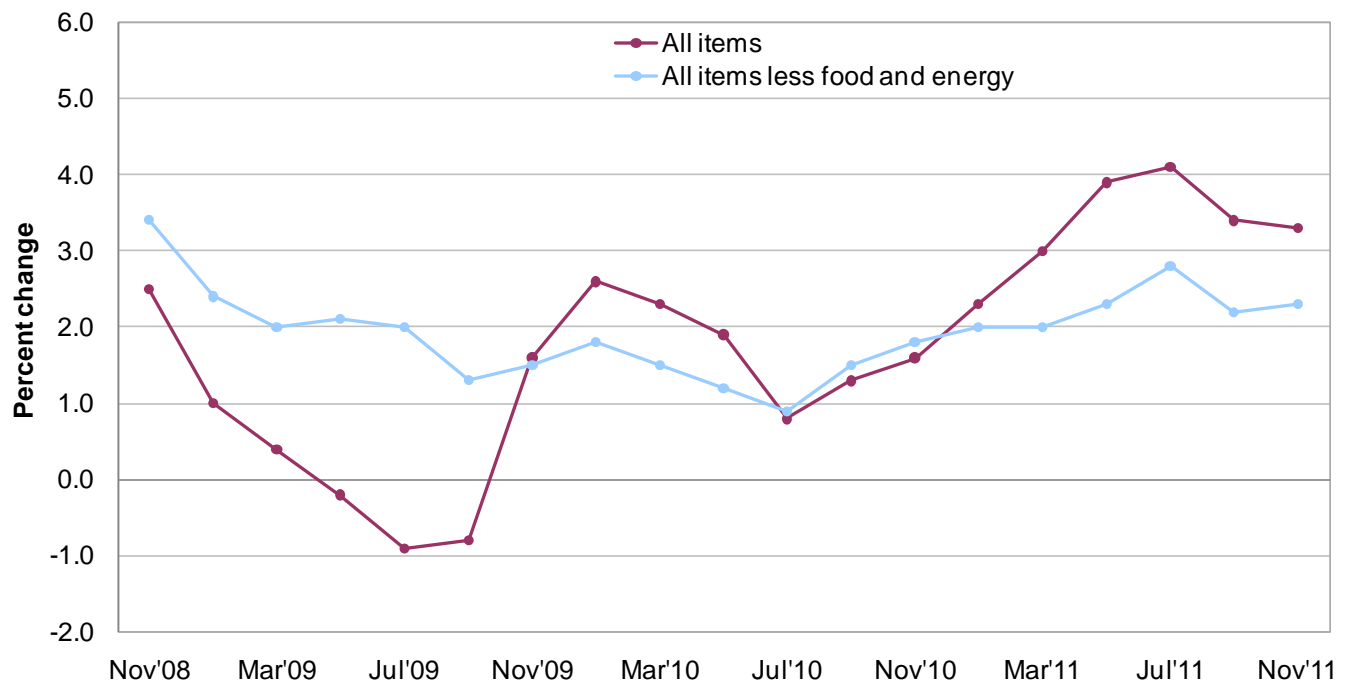
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE – NOVEMBER 2011

Area Prices 0.1 Percent Lower Since September; 3.3 Percent Higher Over the Year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Washington-Baltimore area inched down 0.1 percent from September to November, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that lower energy prices (-5.1 percent) were nearly offset by higher prices for all items less food and energy (0.4 percent) and food (0.6 percent) over the last two months. The decrease in the energy index was led by a seasonal decline in electricity prices. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, two-month changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U rose 3.3 percent. (See chart 1 and table A.) Prices increased for all items less food and energy (2.3 percent), energy (10.1 percent), and food (4.8 percent) since November 2010. (See table 1.)

Chart 1. 12-month percent change in CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), Washington-Baltimore, November 2008 to November 2011 (not seasonally adjusted)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Food

The food index rose 0.6 percent from September to November, led by higher prices for food at home, up 0.7 percent. Within the food at home group, higher prices for a number of items including other fresh fruits and frozen fruits and vegetables were moderated by lower prices for others such as potatoes. The other component of the food index, food away from home, increased 0.4 percent over the last two months.

Over the year, the food index rose 4.8 percent. The recent increase was largely due to higher prices for food at home, which advanced 7.0 percent; food away from home prices also rose, up 2.4 percent since last November.

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, fell 5.1 percent since September due to lower prices for both electricity (-8.7 percent) and gasoline (-4.2 percent). The decrease in electricity prices followed normal seasonal patterns; electricity rates typically rise in June and July as summer rate schedules are introduced, then decline in October and November. Utility (piped) gas service prices increased 1.1 percent over the last two months.

Energy prices advanced 10.1 percent since November 2010 due almost entirely to a 19.4-percent increase in gasoline prices. Lower prices for electricity (-2.5 percent) and utility (piped) gas service (-3.0 percent) moderated the 12-month increase in the energy index.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy rose 0.4 percent from September to November, led by higher prices for owners' equivalent rent of residences (0.7 percent) and apparel (2.7 percent). Lower prices for lodging away from home helped to moderate the overall advance. Recreation prices also fell since September, down 1.2 percent—the largest two-month decrease since March 2009.

Over the last 12 months, the index for all items less food and energy increased 2.3 percent. The advance was led by higher shelter prices, up 2.4 percent since November 2010, particularly those for owners' equivalent rent of residences, up 2.2 percent. Price decreases for household furnishings and operations (-3.3 percent) and recreation (-2.4 percent) moderated the over-the-year increase in the all items less food and energy index.

The January 2012 Consumer Price Index for Washington-Baltimore is scheduled to be released on February 17, 2012, at 8:30 a.m. (ET).

Table A. Washington-Baltimore CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index (not seasonally adjusted)

Month	2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		2011	
	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month
January	0.7	4.1	0.5	2.9	0.8	4.9	-0.7	1.0	0.3	2.6	1.0	2.3
March	0.4	3.3	1.5	4.1	1.3	4.7	0.7	0.4	0.4	2.3	1.2	3.0
May	1.6	4.2	0.8	3.2	1.1	5.0	0.5	-0.2	0.2	1.9	1.0	3.9
July	1.5	4.6	1.1	2.9	1.7	5.7	1.1	-0.9	0.0	0.8	0.1	4.1
September	-0.4	2.8	0.2	3.4	0.0	5.5	0.1	-0.8	0.5	1.3	-0.1	3.4
November	-0.7	3.1	0.4	4.5	-2.5	2.5	-0.2	1.6	0.1	1.6	-0.1	3.3

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 87 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 32 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/opus/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 Washington-Baltimore, D.C.-Md.-Va.-W.Va., Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA) includes the District of Columbia; Baltimore City and the counties of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Carroll, Charles, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, and Washington in Maryland; the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas, and Manassas Park and the counties of Arlington, Clarke, Fairfax, Fauquier, King George, Loudoun, Prince William, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren in Virginia; and the counties of Berkeley and Jefferson in West Virginia.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

For personal assistance or further information on Consumer Price Indexes, as well as other Bureau products, contact the Mid-Atlantic Information Office at (215) 597-3282 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. ET.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Washington-Baltimore, D.C.-Md.-Va.-W.Va. (December 1997=100 unless otherwise noted)

Expenditure category	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Sep. 2011	Oct. 2011	Nov. 2011	Nov. 2010	Sep. 2011	Oct. 2011
All items (1)	147.658	-	147.565	3.3	-0.1	-
Food and beverages (1)	146.268	-	147.024	4.7	0.5	-
Food (1)	147.987	-	148.830	4.8	0.6	-
Food at home	143.878	143.727	144.852	7.0	0.7	0.8
Food away from home (2)	150.252	-	150.921	2.4	0.4	-
Alcoholic beverages (2)	123.242	-	123.107	3.0	-0.1	-
Housing (1)	155.428	-	155.266	1.7	-0.1	-
Shelter	162.366	163.000	163.097	2.4	0.5	0.1
Rent of primary residence (1) (3)	178.491	179.498	179.942	3.4	0.8	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of residences (3)	162.530	163.262	163.599	2.2	0.7	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence (3)	162.519	163.254	163.589	2.2	0.7	0.2
Fuels and utilities	184.399	-	174.659	0.3	-5.3	-
Household energy	182.708	174.504	170.841	-1.1	-6.5	-2.1
Energy services (3) (4)	173.673	165.438	161.502	-2.6	-7.0	-2.4
Electricity (3)	181.751	171.344	165.900	-2.5	-8.7	-3.2
Utility (piped) gas service (3)	127.540	127.457	128.980	-3.0	1.1	1.2
Household furnishings and operations	93.104	-	93.530	-3.3	0.5	-
Apparel (1)	97.518	-	100.108	10.2	2.7	-
Transportation (1)	150.734	-	148.165	7.7	-1.7	-
Private transportation	150.867	-	147.918	8.1	-2.0	-
Motor fuel	294.652	284.712	282.591	19.5	-4.1	-0.7
Gasoline (all types)	294.686	284.542	282.246	19.4	-4.2	-0.8
Gasoline, unleaded regular (5)	300.324	289.574	287.112	19.5	-4.4	-0.9
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade (5)	290.182	281.143	278.364	19.2	-4.1	-1.0
Gasoline, unleaded premium (5)	288.801	279.873	278.953	19.3	-3.4	-0.3
Medical care (1)	155.464	-	156.546	3.2	0.7	-
Recreation	114.291	-	112.939	-2.4	-1.2	-
Education and communication	138.946	-	140.310	1.7	1.0	-
Other goods and services (1)	170.928	-	173.341	3.1	1.4	-
Commodity and service group						
Commodities	129.811	-	129.289	5.1	-0.4	-
Commodities less food and beverages	120.411	-	119.220	5.4	-1.0	-
Nondurables less food and beverages	152.720	-	151.587	9.1	-0.7	-
Durables	86.090	-	84.877	-0.4	-1.4	-
Services	159.315	-	159.529	2.2	0.1	-
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care (1)	147.169	-	147.009	3.3	-0.1	-
All items less shelter	140.184	-	139.685	3.8	-0.4	-
Commodities less food	120.636	-	119.494	5.2	-0.9	-
Nondurables	148.708	-	148.548	6.8	-0.1	-
Nondurables less food	150.282	-	149.237	8.6	-0.7	-
Services less rent of shelter	156.762	-	156.351	2.0	-0.3	-
Services less medical care services	159.709	-	159.859	2.2	0.1	-
Energy (1)	229.947	221.124	218.241	10.1	-5.1	-1.3
All items less energy	141.626	-	142.204	2.7	0.4	-
All items less food and energy (1)	141.510	-	142.048	2.3	0.4	-

(1) For Washington-Baltimore, indexes on a November 1996=100 base.

(2) For Washington-Baltimore, indexes on a November 1997=100 base.

(3) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(4) This index series was formerly titled Gas (piped) and electricity.

(5) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

- Data not available.

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.