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Atlanta, Ga.

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## CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR ATLANTA – DECEMBER 2009

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Atlanta declined 0.3 percent over the two months ending in December at a level of 200.456 (1982-84=100), not seasonally adjusted, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that decreases in the costs of apparel, housing, and food and beverages were partially offset by an increase in the transportation index. For the 12 months ending in December 2009, the CPI-U for Atlanta increased 1.8 percent.

Food costs declined 0.7 percent over the two-month pricing period. During this same period, energy prices increased 3.0 percent. Excluding food and energy, the CPI-U for Atlanta declined 0.7 percent during the November-December pricing period. Over the 12 months ending in December, food costs fell 1.8 percent. The energy index increased 17.0 percent since December 2008. Excluding food and energy, all other items increased 0.5 percent over the past year.

**Table A. Percent changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for Atlanta by expenditure category (not seasonally adjusted).**

Expenditure category	Percentage change	
	Over 12 months since December 2008	Over 2 months since October 2009
All items	1.8	-0.3
Food and beverages	-1.7	-0.6
Housing	-1.4	-0.5
Apparel	9.9	-6.0
Transportation	16.2	1.7
Medical care	-1.9	0.1
Recreation 1/	-12.3	-0.3
Education and communication 1/	7.2	0.0
Other goods and services	7.7	0.0

1/ Index on a December 1997=100 base.

Among the major groups, the apparel index declined 6.0 percent during the November-December pricing period. Since December 2008, apparel costs increased 9.9 percent. The housing index declined 0.5 percent over the two-month pricing period. The shelter index, which measures changes in the costs for rent of primary residence, lodging away from home, owners'

equivalent rent of primary residence, and tenants' and household insurance, decreased 1.0 percent over the two months. The fuels and utilities index rose 1.5 percent over the November-December pricing period, as a 9.7-percent increase in costs for utility (piped) gas service was partially offset by a 2.4-percent decline in electricity costs. Costs for household furnishings and operations inched up 0.1 percent over the November-December pricing period. Since December 2008, the housing index declined 1.4 percent, as shelter costs fell 1.6 percent and costs for fuels and utilities decreased 0.6 percent. Costs for household furnishings and operations declined 0.4 percent over the year.

The food and beverages index decreased 0.6 percent during the November-December pricing period, as a 1.6 percent decline in costs for food at home was partially offset by a 0.2 percent increase in food away from home costs. The index for alcoholic beverages inched up 0.1 percent over the two months. Over the past year, the food and beverages index decreased 1.7 percent as a 4.7-percent decline in food at home prices was partially offset by increases in food away from home costs (1.1 percent) and costs for alcoholic beverages (0.1 percent).

The recreation index decreased 0.3 percent over the November-December pricing period. Over the year, costs for recreation declined 12.3 percent. The other goods and services index (which includes tobacco and smoking products, personal care products and services, and miscellaneous personal goods) was unchanged over the two-month pricing period. Costs for other goods and services increased 7.7 percent from December 2008, the largest 12-month increase for this index since June 2001.

The transportation index advanced 1.7 percent over the two-month pricing period, as motor fuel costs increased 5.0 percent. Over the year, transportation costs increased 16.2 percent, dominated by a 47.0-percent rise in motor fuel prices, the largest 12-month increase in this index since October 2005.

Over the two months, the medical care index inched up 0.1 percent. Medical care costs declined 1.9 percent over-the-year. Over the two month pricing period, costs for education and communication were unchanged. Since December 2008, the education and communication index increased 7.2 percent.

### **Consumer Price Index for the South and Miami-Fort Lauderdale**

Consumer price indexes are published for the Miami-Fort Lauderdale area and the South (which includes the Atlanta and Miami-Fort Lauderdale areas). During the November-December pricing period, consumer prices in the Miami-Fort Lauderdale area edged up 0.2 percent and inched up 0.1 percent in the South. For the 12 months ending in December 2009, the Miami Fort Lauderdale area recorded a 2.1-percent increase and prices in the South region rose 2.9 percent.

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**The Consumer Price Index for February 2010 is scheduled to be released on Thursday, March 18, 2010 at 8:30 a.m. (EST).**

## Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Atlanta is published bi-monthly. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has updated the consumption expenditure weights in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) to the 2005-06 period. The updated expenditure weights for this index replace the 2003-2004 weights that were introduced with the January 2006 CPI release. As originally announced by BLS in December 1998, CPI expenditure weights will continue to be updated at two-year intervals.

The CPI program has completed its conversion to Computer Assisted Data Collection (CADC). Due to the efficiencies gained from conversion to CADC, BLS has extended data collection to cover the entire month, beginning with data for January 2004. CPI data collection is scheduled in terms of business days – weekdays excluding holidays. Formerly, data collection covered three pricing periods, each comprising six business days in most months and five days in November and December. Consequently, the last day of scheduled data collection was usually the 18<sup>th</sup> business day of the month. This allowed time during the end of the month for the mailing of paper schedules back to the Washington Office and the data entry of the information on these schedules. Starting in January 2004, the three pricing periods now have variable lengths, between six and eight business days long. The third pricing period normally will end on the last business day of the month.

Local area CPI indexes are by-products of the national CPI program. Because each local index is a small subset of the national index, it has a smaller sample size and is, therefore, subject to substantially more sampling and measurement error than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. The Bureau of Labor Statistics strongly urges users to consider adopting the national average CPI for use in escalator clauses.

We encourage users interested in learning more about changes to the CPI to contact the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Information on the Consumer Price Index and other surveys are available on our web site at [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov). Current and historical BLS data are also posted on our Internet page at [www.bls.gov/ro4/home.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ro4/home.htm). If you have additional questions, you can contact the Atlanta information office directly by dialing (404) 893-4222. Information from the Consumer Price Index program is available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200, Federal Relay Services: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers and Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, Atlanta, Georgia, (1982-84=100), not seasonally adjusted

Item and group	All Urban Consumers (CPI-U)			Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W)		
	Index	Percent change from		Index	Percent change from	
	Dec. 2009	Dec. 2008	Oct. 2009	Dec. 2009	Dec. 2008	Oct. 2009
All items	200.456	1.8	-0.3	199.331	2.1	-0.2
All items (1967 = 100)	604.515	-	-	602.704	-	-
<b>Food and beverages</b>	218.041	-1.7	-0.6	215.067	-1.6	-0.8
<b>Food</b>	226.802	-1.8	-0.7	221.941	-1.7	-0.8
Food at home	213.672	-4.7	-1.6	205.863	-4.9	-1.8
Food away from home	245.338	1.1	0.2	246.690	1.8	0.2
Alcoholic beverages	139.868	0.1	0.1	138.545	0.1	-0.2
<b>Housing</b>	197.276	-1.4	-0.5	194.676	-1.3	-0.4
Shelter	211.654	-1.6	-1.0	205.706	-1.5	-0.9
Rent of primary residence (1)	213.952	-1.0	-0.8	213.952	-1.0	-0.8
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence (1) (2)	208.455	-2.0	-0.9	194.037	-2.0	-0.9
Fuels and utilities	239.156	-0.6	1.5	237.061	-0.5	1.4
Household energy	212.412	-2.3	1.2	209.561	-2.1	1.0
Gas (piped) and electricity (1)	211.854	-2.4	1.1	209.488	-2.2	1.0
Electricity (1)	183.205	2.0	-2.4	183.204	2.0	-2.4
Utility (piped) gas service (1)	248.387	-10.7	9.7	248.389	-10.7	9.7
Household furnishings and operations	128.722	-0.4	0.1	133.556	-0.7	0.4
<b>Apparel</b>	116.640	9.9	-6.0	117.203	7.8	-6.9
<b>Transportation</b>	177.704	16.2	1.7	176.698	18.0	2.4
Private transportation	176.087	16.7	2.1	174.037	18.5	2.6
Motor fuel	221.109	47.0	5.0	221.088	47.2	5.0
Gasoline (all types)	220.373	51.5	4.9	220.378	51.5	4.9
Gasoline unleaded regular (3)	216.581	54.6	5.2	216.575	54.6	5.2
Gasoline unleaded midgrade (3) (4)	267.699	46.3	3.9	267.699	46.3	3.9
Gasoline unleaded premium (3)	226.776	42.9	4.7	226.765	42.9	4.7
<b>Medical care</b>	321.508	-1.9	0.1	316.858	-1.8	0.1
<b>Recreation (5)</b>	93.304	-12.3	-0.3	90.086	-12.9	-0.1
<b>Education and communication (5)</b>	123.678	7.2	0.0	119.154	5.6	0.0
<b>Other goods and services</b>	311.746	7.7	0.0	358.526	9.8	-0.4
<b>Commodities</b>	165.317	6.2	0.0	170.452	7.0	0.2
<b>Services</b>	235.543	-0.6	-0.5	233.869	-0.5	-0.4
<b>All items less shelter</b>	199.518	3.9	0.1	202.134	4.4	0.2
<b>All items less medical care</b>	193.232	2.0	-0.3	192.791	2.2	-0.2
<b>Energy</b>	197.364	17.0	3.0	197.897	17.1	2.9
<b>All items less energy</b>	200.843	0.2	-0.7	198.855	0.2	-0.6
<b>All items less food and energy</b>	197.178	0.5	-0.7	195.167	0.5	-0.6

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) Index is on a November 1982=100 base.

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

(4) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

(5) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

- Data not available.

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