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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR TAMPA-ST. PETERSBURG-CLEARWATER: FIRST HALF 2009

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater area decreased 0.9 percent in the first half of 2009, not seasonally adjusted, to a level of 188.604 (1987=100), the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that from the first half of 2008 through the first half of 2009, the all items index declined 0.7 percent.

Over the first half of the year, food costs edged up 0.2 percent, while energy costs declined 14.0 percent. Since the first half of 2008, costs for food increased 3.7 percent, while energy costs fell 17.9 percent. The decreases in the energy indexes are the largest 6 and 12-month declines since semi-annual reporting began for the index in 1998. Costs for all items less food and energy increased 0.6 percent in the first half of the year and rose 0.9 percent since the first half of 2008.

Table A. Percent changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater area, by expenditure category.
(not seasonally adjusted).

Expenditure category	Percent change from	
	1 st half 2008 to 1 st half 2009	2 nd half 2008 to 1 st half 2009
All items	-0.7	-0.9
Food and beverages	3.9	0.4
Housing	0.4	-0.1
Apparel	4.9	8.4
Transportation	-11.4	-8.3
Medical care	0.0	0.8
Recreation 1/	1.2	1.2
Education and communication 1/	7.9	1.9
Other goods and services	5.5	4.5

1/ Index on a December 1997=100 base.

Among the major index groups, the index for transportation declined 8.3 percent in the first half of 2009, as the cost of motor fuel decreased 32.5 percent. Over the year, transportation costs fell 11.4 percent, reflecting a 38.4-percent decline in the cost of motor fuel. The 12-month decrease in motor fuel costs is the largest decline for that index since semi-annual reporting began in 1998.

The index for housing inched down 0.1 percent in the first half of the year. Costs for shelter which includes rent of primary residence, lodging away from home, owners' equivalent rent of primary

residence, and household insurance declined 1.2 percent. The household furnishing and operations index decreased 0.6 percent since the second half of 2008, while fuel and utilities costs rose 8.2 percent. Since the first half of 2008, housing costs increased 0.4 percent as an 11.3-percent rise in costs for fuels and utilities was partially offset by a 1.1-percent decline in shelter costs. The index for household furnishings and operations inched up 0.1 percent over the year.

Over the first half of 2009, apparel costs increased 8.4 percent. Since the first half of 2008, apparel costs rose 4.9 percent. Costs for other goods and services (which includes tobacco and smoking products, personal care products and services, and miscellaneous personal goods) increased 4.5 percent in the first half of 2009; this was the largest 6-month increase since the first half of 1999. Over the year, the other goods and services index advanced 5.5 percent.

Education and communication costs advanced 1.9 percent in the first half of 2009. Since the first half of 2008, the education and communication index rose 7.9 percent.

The food and beverages index rose 0.4 percent in the first half of the year, as costs for food away from home advanced 2.6 percent and costs for food at home declined 1.1 percent. Alcoholic beverages' costs increased 2.1 percent over the same time period. Since the first half of 2008, the food and beverages index increased 3.9 percent. Over the year, prices for food away from home advanced 5.4 percent and costs for food at home increased 2.5 percent. Costs for alcoholic beverages rose 6.1 percent over the year.

The index for recreation increased 1.2 in the first half of the year. Over the year, recreation prices also increased 1.2 percent. The remaining category, medical care, increased 0.8 percent in the first half of the year and was unchanged since the first half of 2008.

The South and metropolitan areas in the Southeast

Semi-annual averages are also produced for the South region. For the first half of 2009, costs for all items in the South declined 1.5 percent. Since the first half of 2008, costs have decreased 0.6 percent. In Atlanta, costs decreased 2.9 percent during the first half of the year and fell 3.2 percent since the first half of 2008. For Miami-Fort Lauderdale, costs decreased 1.1 percent in the first half of 2009 and edged down 0.2 percent since the first half of 2008.

Technical Note

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has updated the consumption expenditure weights in the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) and Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) to the 2005-06 period. The updated expenditure weights for these indexes replace the 2003-2004 weights which were introduced effective 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 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 18th 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 in 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. Current and historical BLS data are also posted on our Web site at 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, Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, Florida, (1987=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	
	1st half 2009	1st half 2008	2nd half 2008	1st half 2009	1st half 2008	2nd half 2008
All items	188.604	-0.7	-0.9	187.835	-0.8	-1.0
Food and beverages	193.649	3.9	0.4	195.530	4.0	0.5
Food	192.534	3.7	0.2	193.776	3.9	0.4
Food at home	189.581	2.5	-1.1	191.523	2.7	-0.9
Food away from home	197.995	5.4	2.6	199.123	5.9	3.0
Alcoholic beverages	195.156	6.1	2.1	198.752	4.6	2.1
Housing	188.080	0.4	-0.1	189.014	1.1	0.2
Shelter	203.665	-1.1	-1.2	204.196	-0.5	-0.9
Rent of primary residence	201.840	0.3	-0.4	201.840	0.3	-0.4
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence (1)	215.040	0.2	-0.9	215.040	0.2	-0.9
Fuels and utilities	209.794	11.3	8.2	204.720	10.5	7.0
Household energy	180.471	14.0	11.8	177.635	12.7	9.7
Gas (piped) and electricity	178.766	14.8	12.5	176.034	12.9	10.0
Electricity	176.501	15.9	14.0	176.501	15.9	14.0
Utility (piped) gas service	274.453	-3.0	-10.0	274.453	-3.0	-10.0
Household furnishings and operations	122.372	0.1	-0.6	118.681	1.4	0.4
Apparel	156.701	4.9	8.4	141.760	6.0	9.8
Transportation	163.484	-11.4	-8.3	167.595	-13.1	-9.6
Private transportation	166.287	-11.8	-8.2	169.806	-13.4	-9.7
Motor fuel	222.476	-38.4	-32.5	222.460	-38.4	-32.6
Gasoline (all types)	218.260	-38.3	-32.4	218.260	-38.3	-32.4
Gasoline unleaded regular (1)	215.261	-39.0	-33.1	215.261	-39.0	-33.1
Gasoline unleaded midgrade (1) (2)	192.953	-37.1	-30.8	192.953	-37.1	-30.8
Gasoline unleaded premium (1)	219.015	-36.2	-30.1	219.015	-36.2	-30.1
Medical care	297.416	0.0	0.8	305.259	0.3	0.7
Recreation (3)	112.543	1.2	1.2	109.947	1.2	1.5
Education and communication (3)	118.102	7.9	1.9	119.394	6.0	1.5
Other goods and services	244.183	5.5	4.5	251.568	7.0	5.6
Commodities	157.268	-3.9	-3.0	161.531	-3.8	-2.8
Services	216.988	1.5	0.4	213.698	1.6	0.4
All items less shelter	182.771	-0.5	-0.8	181.974	-1.0	-1.1
All items less medical care	182.408	-0.7	-1.1	182.518	-0.9	-1.1
Energy	194.852	-17.9	-14.0	198.149	-18.2	-14.6
All items less energy	187.877	1.3	0.5	186.202	1.5	0.7
All items less food and energy	187.316	0.9	0.6	184.945	1.0	0.8

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

(2) Index is on a December 1993=100 base.

(3) Index is on a December 1997=100 base.

- Data not available.