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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

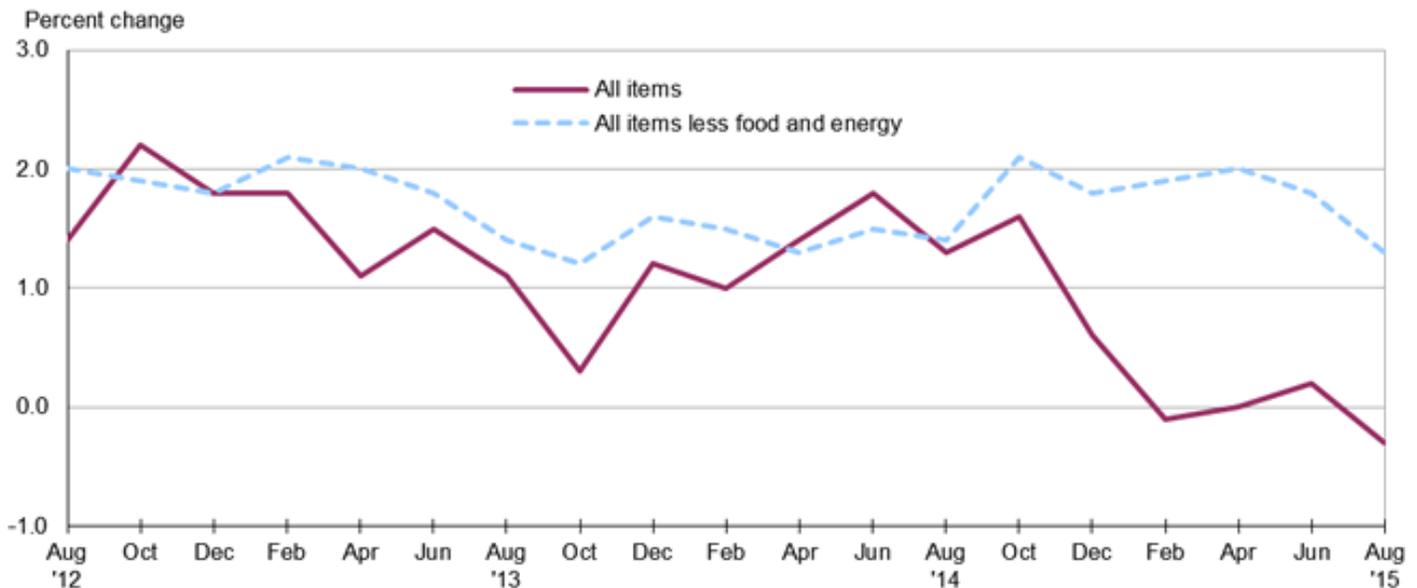
Consumer Price Index, Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City – August 2015

Area prices down 0.5 percent since June and 0.3 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City declined 0.5 percent over the last two months, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted the decline was the first bimonthly decrease for the all items index since February. The decrease reflected lower prices for energy (-3.7 percent), all items less food and energy (-0.1 percent), and food (-0.4 percent) since June. (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 edged down 0.3 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A.](#)) A 16.8-percent drop in the energy index was largely offset by a 1.3-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index and a 1.6-percent rise in the food index since August 2014. (See [table 1.](#))

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Philadelphia, August 2012–August 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

The food index decreased 0.4 percent over the last two months, led by a 0.7-percent decline in food away from home prices. Prices were also lower for food at home, down 0.3 percent. Within the food at home component, prices were lower for various items including cheese and related products, carbonated drinks, and uncooked beef steaks. Higher prices for eggs, snacks, and potatoes helped moderate the two-month decrease in prices for food at home.

Food prices rose 1.6 percent over the year, as prices for both components also increased. Prices for food at home advanced 1.6 percent and those for food away from home increased 1.5 percent since last August.

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, declined 3.7 percent since June, led by a 7.7-percent drop in gasoline prices. Prices for electricity also declined, down 0.3 percent, while those for utility (piped) gas service increased since June, up 0.3 percent.

Energy prices fell 16.8 percent since August 2014, due mostly to a 26.5-percent drop in gasoline prices. Utility (piped) gas service prices also dropped, down 15.8 percent, while electricity prices increased over the year, up 0.8 percent.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy inched down 0.1 percent since June, reflecting lower prices for household furnishings and operations (-4.4 percent) and recreation (-1.2 percent). Moderating the decrease in the all items less food and energy index was a seasonal increase in prices for apparel, up 6.6 percent.

Since August 2014, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.3 percent. The advance was due largely to an over-the-year increase in the shelter index, up 1.6 percent, as the owners' equivalent rent of residences index was up 2.6 percent. Higher prices for medical care (4.0 percent) and other goods and services (6.5 percent) also contributed to the rise. Lower prices for household furnishings and operations (-2.2 percent) and apparel (-2.6 percent) moderated the increase in the all items less food and energy index since last August.

Table A. Philadelphia CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	2-month	12-month								
February.....	1.3	1.9	0.7	2.2	0.7	1.8	0.5	1.0	-0.2	-0.1
April.....	1.0	2.5	0.8	2.0	0.1	1.1	0.5	1.4	0.5	0.0
June.....	0.6	2.8	-0.2	1.3	0.3	1.5	0.6	1.8	0.8	0.2
August.....	0.7	3.4	0.9	1.4	0.5	1.1	0.0	1.3	-0.5	-0.3
October.....	-0.3	3.0	0.4	2.2	-0.4	0.3	-0.1	1.6		
December.....	-0.5	2.8	-0.9	1.8	0.1	1.2	-0.8	0.6		

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

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City 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 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 **Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md., Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania; Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem Counties in New Jersey; New Castle County in Delaware; and Cecil County in Maryland.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md., (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jun. 2015	Jul. 2015	Aug. 2015	Aug. 2014	Jun. 2015	Jul. 2015
All items.....		245.675		244.519	-0.3	-0.5	
All items (1967 = 100).....		709.742		706.402			
Food and beverages.....		233.426		232.601	1.3	-0.4	
Food.....		233.877		232.832	1.6	-0.4	
Food at home.....		244.848	244.369	244.192	1.6	-0.3	-0.1
Food away from home.....		213.688		212.245	1.5	-0.7	
Alcoholic beverages.....		225.087		227.074	-2.7	0.9	
Housing.....		250.647		250.060	0.3	-0.2	
Shelter.....		308.032	309.170	308.683	1.6	0.2	-0.2
Rent of primary residence ⁽¹⁾		289.233	290.487	288.459	2.4	-0.3	-0.7
Owners' equivalent rent of residences ^{(1) (2) (3)} ...		316.707	317.375	317.514	2.6	0.3	0.0
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence ^{(1) (2) (3)}		316.707	317.375	317.514	2.6	0.3	0.0
Fuels and utilities.....		205.368		205.363	-5.9	0.0	
Household energy.....		173.311	172.787	172.443	-7.7	-0.5	-0.2
Gas (piped) and electricity ⁽¹⁾		184.821	184.376	184.594	-4.3	-0.1	0.1
Electricity ⁽¹⁾		195.936	195.341	195.393	0.8	-0.3	0.0
Utility (piped) gas service ⁽¹⁾		154.550	154.443	155.010	-15.8	0.3	0.4
Household furnishings and operations.....		119.192		113.901	-2.2	-4.4	
Apparel		100.509		107.141	-2.6	6.6	
Transportation.....		210.967		204.873	-7.5	-2.9	
Private transportation.....		208.902		203.420	-7.9	-2.6	
Motor fuel.....		242.637	244.164	223.909	-26.5	-7.7	-8.3
Gasoline (all types).....		239.309	240.861	220.870	-26.5	-7.7	-8.3
Gasoline, unleaded regular ⁽⁴⁾		237.770	239.383	218.573	-27.1	-8.1	-8.7

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Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jun. 2015	Jul. 2015	Aug. 2015	Aug. 2014	Jun. 2015	Jul. 2015
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade ⁽⁴⁾ ⁽⁵⁾		239.315	240.534	223.077	-24.6	-6.8	-7.3
Gasoline, unleaded premium ⁽⁴⁾		234.391	235.588	221.518	-22.8	-5.5	-6.0
Medical care		494.014		491.840	4.0	-0.4	
Recreation ⁽⁶⁾		125.423		123.889	-0.8	-1.2	
Education and communication ⁽⁶⁾		133.273		133.355	0.7	0.1	
Other goods and services		511.924		508.127	6.5	-0.7	
Commodity and service group.....							
Commodities.....		179.038		177.055	-3.6	-1.1	
Commodities less food and beverages.....		149.014		146.579	-6.7	-1.6	
Nondurables less food and beverages.....		184.382		182.733	-9.0	-0.9	
Durables.....		108.763		105.545	-2.3	-3.0	
Services.....		313.733		313.300	1.5	-0.1	
Special aggregate indexes.....							
All items less shelter.....		225.810		223.893	-1.4	-0.8	
All items less medical care.....		235.247		234.134	-0.7	-0.5	
Commodities less food.....		151.764		149.463	-6.5	-1.5	
Nondurables.....		209.794		208.509	-3.9	-0.6	
Nondurables less food.....		186.766		185.332	-8.6	-0.8	
Services less rent of shelter ⁽²⁾		327.056		325.269	1.2	-0.5	
Services less medical care services.....		299.540		299.368	1.3	-0.1	
Energy.....		198.856	199.086	191.421	-16.8	-3.7	-3.9
All items less energy.....		252.689		252.216	1.4	-0.2	

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Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jun. 2015	Jul. 2015	Aug. 2015	Aug. 2014	Jun. 2015	Jul. 2015
All items less food and energy.....		258.494		258.122	1.3	-0.1	

- (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) This index series underwent a change in composition in January 2010. The expenditure class now includes weight from secondary residences, and has been re-titled "Owners' equivalent rent of residences." The item stratum "Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence" excludes secondary residences.
 - (4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
 - (5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.
 - (6) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.
- Note: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.