

For Release: Tuesday, November 17, 2015

15-2237-PHI

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

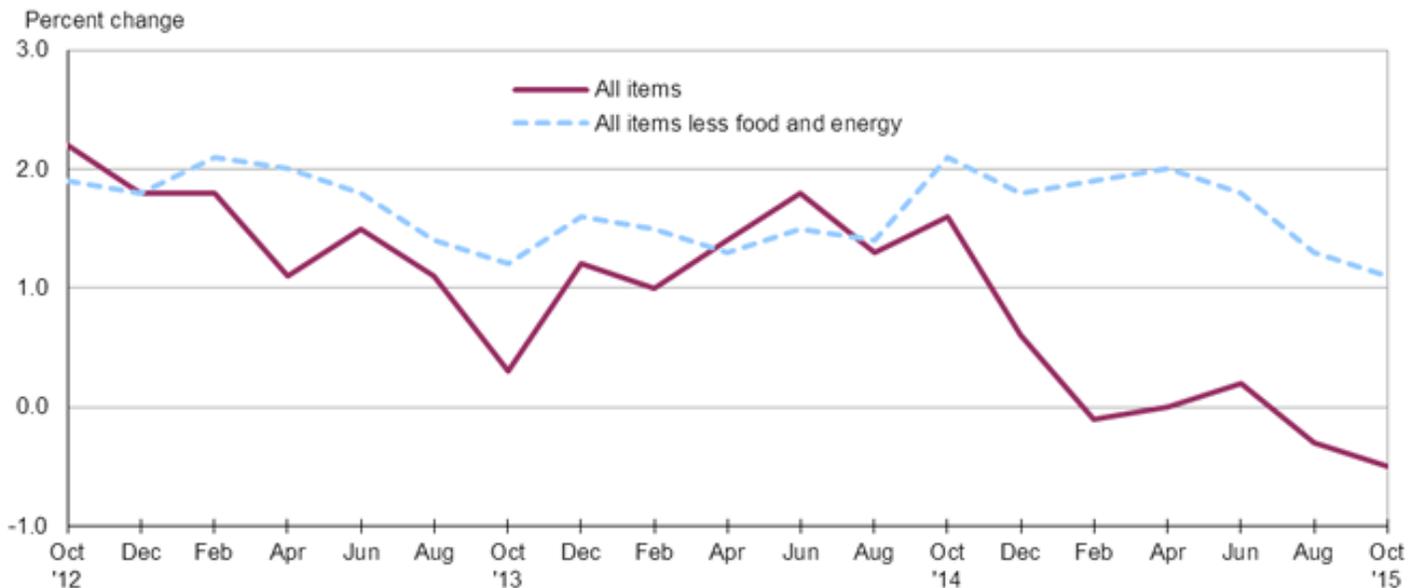
Consumer Price Index, Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City – October 2015

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

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City declined 0.3 percent over the last two months, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that the decrease reflected lower prices for energy (-7.6 percent), moderated by higher prices for all items less food and energy (0.3 percent) and food (0.4 percent) since August. (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 decreased 0.5 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) An 18.4-percent drop in the energy index was moderated by a 1.1-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index and a 1.7-percent rise in the food index since October 2014. (See [table 1](#).)

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



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

The food index increased 0.4 percent over the last two months. Prices for both components of the food index—food at home and food away from home—also rose 0.4 percent since August. Within the food at home component, prices were higher for various items including other fresh vegetables; breakfast cereal; and fresh biscuits, rolls, and muffins. Lower prices for eggs and milk helped moderate the two-month increase in prices for food at home.

The food index rose 1.7 percent over the year, as prices for both components also increased. Prices for food at home advanced 1.7 percent and those for food away from home increased 1.6 percent since last October.

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, declined 7.6 percent since August, led by a 13.6-percent drop in gasoline prices. Prices for electricity and utility (piped) gas service also declined since August, down 2.7 percent and 4.1 percent, respectively.

Energy prices fell 18.4 percent since October 2014, due mostly to a 30.9-percent drop in gasoline prices. Utility (piped) gas service prices also fell, down 14.3 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 edged up 0.3 percent since August, reflecting higher prices for apparel (5.4 percent) and education and communication (1.0 percent). Moderating the increase in the all items less food and energy index was a decrease in prices for new and used motor vehicles.

Since October 2014, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.1 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 1.5 percent. Higher prices for medical care (3.4 percent) also contributed to the rise. Lower prices for apparel (-3.2 percent) helped to moderate the increase in the all items less food and energy index since last October.

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	-0.3	-0.5
December.....	-0.5	2.8	-0.9	1.8	0.1	1.2	-0.8	0.6		

The Consumer Price Index for December 2015 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, January 20, 2016, 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.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

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	Aug. 2015	Sep. 2015	Oct. 2015	Oct. 2014	Aug. 2015	Sep. 2015
All items.....		244.519		243.697	-0.5	-0.3	
All items (1967 = 100).....		706.402		704.027			
Food and beverages.....		232.601		233.157	1.2	0.2	
Food.....		232.832		233.724	1.7	0.4	
Food at home.....		244.192	242.987	245.062	1.7	0.4	0.9
Food away from home.....		212.245		213.132	1.6	0.4	
Alcoholic beverages.....		227.074		223.350	-4.1	-1.6	
Housing.....		250.060		249.367	0.5	-0.3	
Shelter.....		308.683	310.466	308.532	1.6	0.0	-0.6
Rent of primary residence ⁽¹⁾		288.459	289.688	287.142	1.3	-0.5	-0.9
Owners' equivalent rent of residences ^{(1) (2) (3)} ...		317.514	318.487	316.693	1.5	-0.3	-0.6
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence ^{(1) (2) (3)}		317.514	318.487	316.693	1.5	-0.3	-0.6
Fuels and utilities.....		205.363		200.366	-5.0	-2.4	
Household energy.....		172.443	170.344	167.073	-7.0	-3.1	-1.9
Gas (piped) and electricity ⁽¹⁾		184.594	183.218	178.948	-3.7	-3.1	-2.3
Electricity ⁽¹⁾		195.393	194.505	190.195	0.8	-2.7	-2.2
Utility (piped) gas service ⁽¹⁾		155.010	152.634	148.600	-14.3	-4.1	-2.6
Household furnishings and operations.....		113.901		114.727	-1.1	0.7	
Apparel		107.141		112.966	-3.2	5.4	
Transportation.....		204.873		197.345	-8.6	-3.7	
Private transportation.....		203.420		195.683	-9.2	-3.8	
Motor fuel.....		223.909	203.292	193.621	-30.9	-13.5	-4.8
Gasoline (all types).....		220.870	200.494	190.928	-30.9	-13.6	-4.8
Gasoline, unleaded regular ⁽⁴⁾		218.573	197.424	187.770	-31.8	-14.1	-4.9

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) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Aug. 2015	Sep. 2015	Oct. 2015	Oct. 2014	Aug. 2015	Sep. 2015
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade ⁽⁴⁾ ⁽⁵⁾		223.077	206.442	197.941	-28.0	-11.3	-4.1
Gasoline, unleaded premium ⁽⁴⁾		221.518	206.235	197.407	-25.6	-10.9	-4.3
Medical care		491.840		491.488	3.4	-0.1	
Recreation ⁽⁶⁾		123.889		123.489	-0.5	-0.3	
Education and communication ⁽⁶⁾		133.355		134.707	0.8	1.0	
Other goods and services		508.127		509.286	2.8	0.2	
Commodity and service group.....							
Commodities.....		177.055		175.533	-4.3	-0.9	
Commodities less food and beverages.....		146.579		144.176	-7.9	-1.6	
Nondurables less food and beverages.....		182.733		178.493	-11.0	-2.3	
Durables.....		105.545		105.129	-1.9	-0.4	
Services.....		313.300		313.095	1.5	-0.1	
Special aggregate indexes.....							
All items less shelter.....		223.893		222.780	-1.7	-0.5	
All items less medical care.....		234.134		233.297	-0.8	-0.4	
Commodities less food.....		149.463		147.013	-7.7	-1.6	
Nondurables.....		208.509		206.463	-4.9	-1.0	
Nondurables less food.....		185.332		181.123	-10.5	-2.3	
Services less rent of shelter ⁽²⁾		325.269		324.981	1.4	-0.1	
Services less medical care services.....		299.368		299.102	1.4	-0.1	
Energy.....		191.421	182.513	176.888	-18.4	-7.6	-3.1
All items less energy.....		252.216		252.897	1.2	0.3	

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) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Aug. 2015	Sep. 2015	Oct. 2015	Oct. 2014	Aug. 2015	Sep. 2015
All items less food and energy.....		258.122		258.771	1.1	0.3	

- (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.