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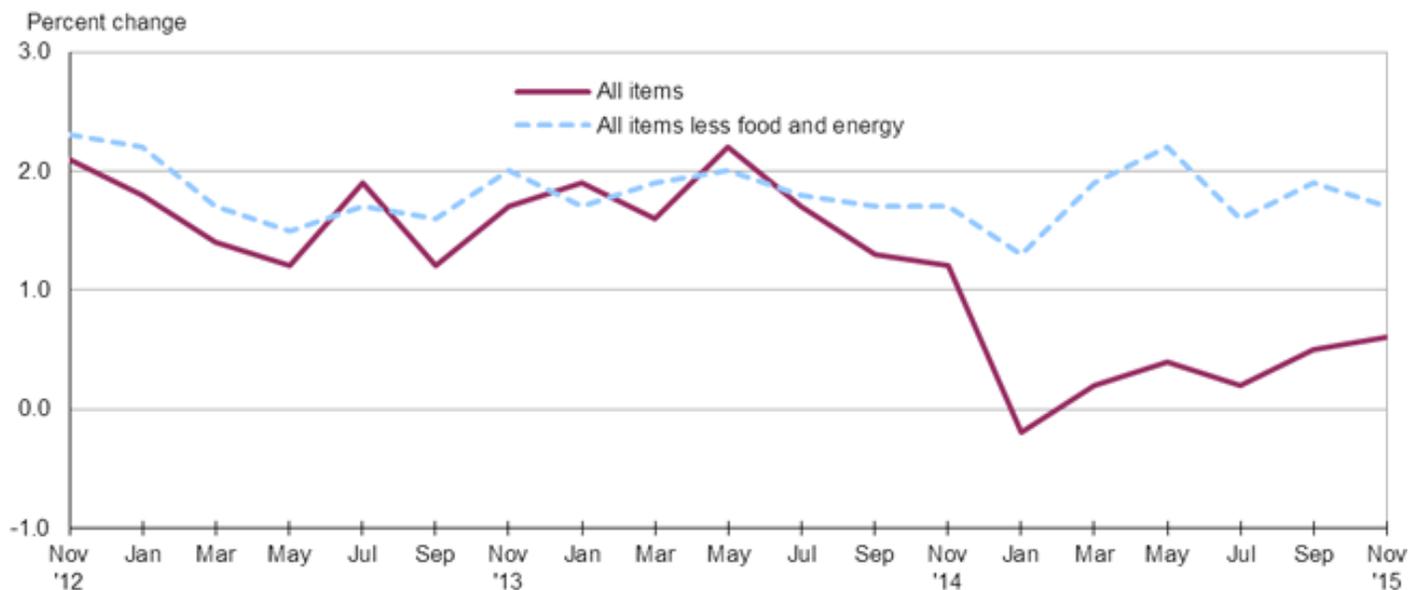
Consumer Price Index, Washington-Baltimore – November 2015

Area prices down 0.3 percent since September; up 0.6 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Washington-Baltimore decreased 0.3 percent over the last two months, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted the decline was led by a 5.2-percent decrease in the energy index. The food index inched down 0.1 percent, while the all items less food and energy index inched up 0.1 percent since September. (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 increased 0.6 percent, due largely to a 1.7-percent rise in the all items less food and energy index. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) Since November 2014, the food index rose 1.0 percent, while the energy index dropped 12.7 percent. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Washington, D.C., November 2012–November 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

After increasing 1.4 percent from July to September, the food index inched down 0.1 percent over the last two months. Lower prices for nonfrozen noncarbonated juices and drinks, fresh fish and seafood, and other pork including roasts and picnics contributed to the 0.4-percent decrease in the food at home index. The food away from home index rose 0.3 percent since September.

Food prices rose 1.0 percent over the year, as prices for both components also increased. Prices for food away from home advanced 1.9 percent and those for food at home edged up 0.2 percent since last November.

Energy

Since September, the energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, declined 5.2 percent, mostly due to a 7.3-percent decrease in gasoline prices. Electricity and utility (piped) gas service prices were also lower over the last two months, down 3.7 and 2.5 percent, respectively.

Energy prices fell 12.7 percent over the year, led by a 24.8-percent drop in gasoline prices. Utility (piped) gas service prices also declined since November 2014, down 8.7 percent, while electricity prices rose 3.7 percent.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy inched up 0.1 percent since September. The increase was due largely to an increase in shelter prices (0.5 percent), as the owners' equivalent rent of residences index was up 0.6 percent. Lower prices for apparel (-2.7 percent) and recreation (-0.9 percent), among others, nearly offset the overall rise in the all items less food and energy index.

Since November 2014, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.7 percent. The increase was due largely to an over-the-year rise in prices for shelter (2.0 percent), as well as those for medical care (5.6 percent) and education and communication (3.3 percent). Lower prices for apparel (-1.7 percent) moderated the increase in the all items less food and energy index since last November.

Table A. Washington, D.C. 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								
January.....	1.0	2.3	0.4	2.7	0.1	1.8	0.4	1.9	-1.0	-0.2
March.....	1.2	3.0	1.3	2.8	0.9	1.4	0.6	1.6	1.0	0.2
May.....	1.0	3.9	0.1	1.8	-0.2	1.2	0.4	2.2	0.6	0.4
July.....	0.1	4.1	-0.2	1.4	0.5	1.9	0.0	1.7	-0.2	0.2
September.....	-0.1	3.4	1.3	2.8	0.6	1.2	0.2	1.3	0.5	0.5
November.....	-0.1	3.3	-0.7	2.1	-0.2	1.7	-0.4	1.2	-0.3	0.6

The Consumer Price Index for December 2015 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, January 20, 2016, at 8:30 a.m. (EDT).

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Washington-Baltimore 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 **Washington-Baltimore, D.C.-Md.-Va.-W.Va., Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area** 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, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, King George, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren in Virginia; and the counties of Berkeley and Jefferson in West Virginia.

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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) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Sep. 2015	Oct. 2015	Nov. 2015	Nov. 2014	Sep. 2015	Oct. 2015
All items ⁽¹⁾		156.278		155.820	0.6	-0.3	
Food and beverages ⁽¹⁾		156.616		156.585	0.9	0.0	
Food ⁽¹⁾		158.094		158.003	1.0	-0.1	
Food at home		149.751	150.129	149.177	0.2	-0.4	-0.6
Food away from home ⁽²⁾		165.969		166.493	1.9	0.3	
Alcoholic beverages ⁽²⁾		136.222		136.817	0.3	0.4	
Housing ⁽¹⁾		168.462		168.682	1.8	0.1	
Shelter		179.578	180.035	180.414	2.0	0.5	0.2
Rent of primary residence ^{(1) (3)}		199.795	200.030	200.272	2.1	0.2	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of residences ^{(3) (4)}		179.778	180.519	180.888	2.1	0.6	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence ^{(3) (4)}		179.770	180.498	180.871	2.1	0.6	0.2
Fuels and utilities		189.141		184.698	1.5	-2.3	
Household energy		179.365	178.335	173.177	-0.1	-3.4	-2.9
Gas (piped) and electricity ⁽³⁾		172.510	171.579	166.521	1.0	-3.5	-2.9
Electricity ⁽³⁾		186.930	185.924	180.016	3.7	-3.7	-3.2
Utility (piped) gas service ⁽³⁾		113.547	112.927	110.683	-8.7	-2.5	-2.0
Household furnishings and operations		89.073		88.868	0.1	-0.2	
Apparel ⁽¹⁾		98.415		95.710	-1.7	-2.7	
Transportation ⁽¹⁾		139.696		137.672	-7.0	-1.4	
Private transportation		137.180		134.954	-7.0	-1.6	
Motor fuel		199.105	189.807	184.578	-24.8	-7.3	-2.8
Gasoline (all types)		198.812	189.477	184.255	-24.8	-7.3	-2.8
Gasoline, unleaded regular ⁽⁵⁾		197.280	187.412	181.935	-25.9	-7.8	-2.9
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade ⁽⁵⁾		210.807	202.416	197.854	-21.2	-6.1	-2.3

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) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Sep. 2015	Oct. 2015	Nov. 2015	Nov. 2014	Sep. 2015	Oct. 2015
Gasoline, unleaded premium ⁽⁵⁾		215.348	207.822	203.634	-20.4	-5.4	-2.0
Medical care ⁽¹⁾		181.231		181.222	5.6	0.0	
Recreation		118.840		117.801	1.0	-0.9	
Education and communication		153.637		153.414	3.3	-0.1	
Other goods and services ⁽¹⁾		179.394		179.091	-0.4	-0.2	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		126.701		125.107	-2.8	-1.3	
Commodities less food and beverages		110.309		107.901	-5.5	-2.2	
Nondurables less food and beverages		137.967		133.599	-7.8	-3.2	
Durables		80.554		80.021	-1.9	-0.7	
Services		176.156		176.500	2.4	0.2	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter		144.693		143.627	-0.3	-0.7	
All items less medical care ⁽¹⁾		154.697		154.207	0.2	-0.3	
Commodities less food		111.514		109.240	-5.2	-2.0	
Nondurables		146.964		144.861	-3.1	-1.4	
Nondurables less food		137.885		133.951	-7.1	-2.9	
Services less rent of shelter		173.118		172.903	2.8	-0.1	
Services less medical care services		175.650		175.962	2.0	0.2	
Energy ⁽¹⁾		187.384	182.851	177.673	-12.7	-5.2	-2.8
All items less energy		153.040		153.100	1.6	0.0	

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) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Sep. 2015	Oct. 2015	Nov. 2015	Nov. 2014	Sep. 2015	Oct. 2015
All items less food and energy ⁽¹⁾		153.199		153.284	1.7	0.1	

(1) Indexes on a November 1996=100 base.

(2) 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 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.

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

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