



For Release: Wednesday, March 16, 2016

16-588-PHI

MID-ATLANTIC INFORMATION OFFICE: Philadelphia, Pa.

Technical information: (215) 597-3282 BLSInfoPhiladelphia@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic

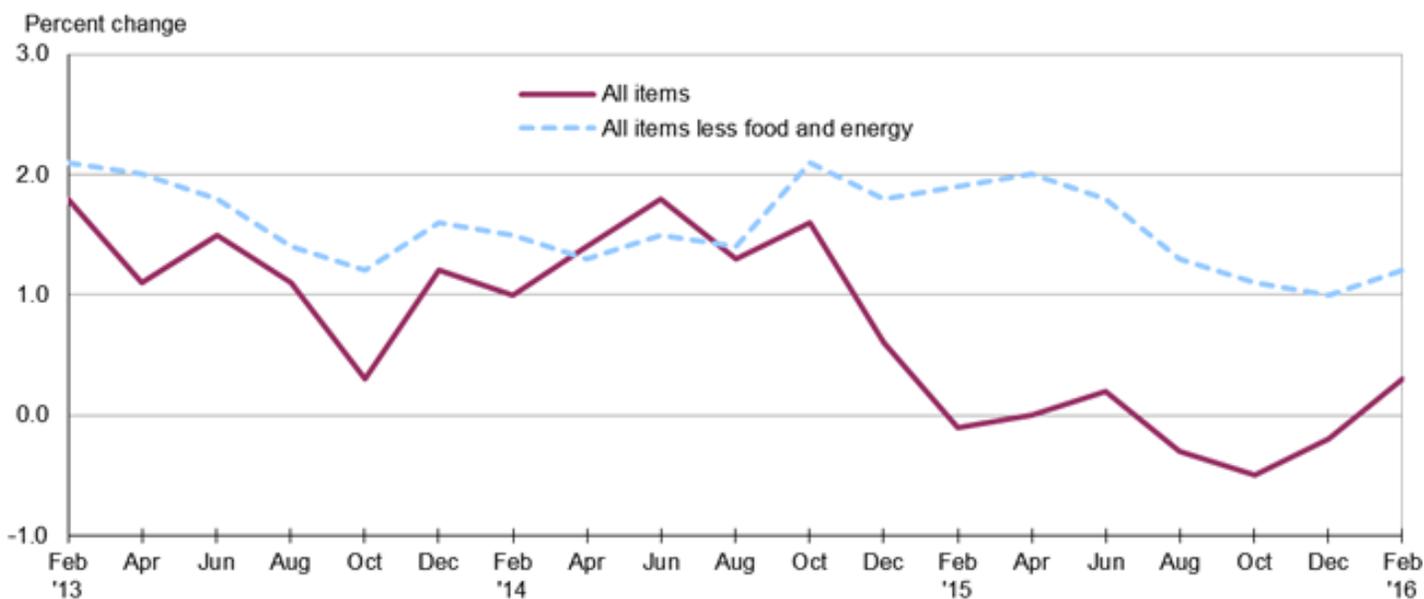
Media contact: (215) 861-5600 BLSMediaPhiladelphia@bls.gov

Consumer Price Index, Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City – February 2016 **Area prices up 0.3 percent since December and 0.3 percent over the year**

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City increased 0.3 percent over the last two months, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that the recent increase reflected higher prices for all items less food and energy (0.9 percent). Meanwhile, prices for both energy and food decreased since December, down 4.9 percent and 0.3 percent, respectively. (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 0.3 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A.](#)) A 1.2-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index and a 2.0-percent increase in the food index were moderated by a 12.1-percent drop in the energy index since February 2015. (See [table 1.](#))

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Philadelphia, February 2013–February 2016



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Unchanged from October to December, the food index edged down 0.3 percent over the last two months. Prices for food at home declined 0.6 percent, while those for food away from home inched up 0.1 percent since December. Within the food at home component, lower prices for various items including bacon, breakfast sausage, and related products and fresh fish and seafood were moderated by higher prices for carbonated drinks and eggs, among others.

The food index rose 2.0 percent over the year, as prices for both components also increased. Prices for food at home advanced 2.0 percent and those for food away from home increased 2.1 percent since last February.

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, decreased 4.9 percent since December. This was due mostly to lower prices for gasoline, down 14.2 percent over the last two months. Prices for both electricity and utility (piped) gas service increased since December, up 2.6 and 0.2 percent, respectively.

Energy prices fell 12.1 percent since February 2015, due mostly to a 20.1-percent drop in gasoline prices. Utility (piped) gas service and electricity prices were also lower, down 16.2 and 0.2 percent, respectively, over the year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.9 percent since December, reflecting higher prices for apparel (7.2 percent) and medical care (1.8 percent), among others. Moderating the two-month increase in the all items less food and energy index was a decrease in prices for education and communication (-0.5 percent).

Since February 2015, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.2 percent. Over-the-year price increases for shelter (0.8 percent), particularly the owners' equivalent rent of residences component (1.3 percent), and other goods and services (10.3 percent) contributed to the rise. Lower prices for apparel (-3.2 percent) and household furnishings and operations (-1.5 percent), among others, helped to moderate the increase in the all items less food and energy index since last February.

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

Month	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
	2-month	12-month								
February	0.7	2.2	0.7	1.8	0.5	1.0	-0.2	-0.1	0.3	0.3
April	0.8	2.0	0.1	1.1	0.5	1.4	0.5	0.0		
June	-0.2	1.3	0.3	1.5	0.6	1.8	0.8	0.2		
August	0.9	1.4	0.5	1.1	0.0	1.3	-0.5	-0.3		
October	0.4	2.2	-0.4	0.3	-0.1	1.6	-0.3	-0.5		
December	-0.9	1.8	0.1	1.2	-0.8	0.6	-0.6	-0.2		

The Consumer Price Index for April 2016 is scheduled to be released Tuesday, May 17, 2016 at 8:30 am (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	Dec. 2015	Jan. 2016	Feb. 2016	Feb. 2015	Dec. 2015	Jan. 2016
All items		242.356		243.132	0.3	0.3	
All items (1967 = 100)		700.153		702.393			
Food and beverages		233.378		233.466	1.9	0.0	
Food		233.752		233.070	2.0	-0.3	
Food at home		244.977	244.694	243.583	2.0	-0.6	-0.5
Food away from home		213.285		213.552	2.1	0.1	
Alcoholic beverages		226.018		235.136	0.3	4.0	
Housing		248.974		249.542	-0.1	0.2	
Shelter		308.915	308.916	309.464	0.8	0.2	0.2
Rent of primary residence (1)		288.295	288.600	288.746	0.2	0.2	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of residences (1) (2) (3)		317.682	318.152	318.459	1.3	0.2	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence (1) (2) (3)		317.682	318.152	318.459	1.3	0.2	0.1
Fuels and utilities		197.644		199.079	-5.2	0.7	
Household energy		164.211	166.531	165.632	-7.1	0.9	-0.5
Gas (piped) and electricity (1)		176.937	180.728	180.333	-4.9	1.9	-0.2
Electricity (1)		190.407	196.095	195.412	-0.2	2.6	-0.3
Utility (piped) gas service (1)		141.896	141.961	142.122	-16.2	0.2	0.1
Household furnishings and operations		113.523		113.496	-1.5	0.0	
Apparel		102.026		109.401	-3.2	7.2	
Transportation		196.131		193.887	-2.8	-1.1	
Private transportation		195.185		191.655	-2.9	-1.8	
Motor fuel		189.696	176.667	162.778	-20.2	-14.2	-7.9
Gasoline (all types)		187.087	174.255	160.516	-20.1	-14.2	-7.9
Gasoline, unleaded regular (4)		183.854	170.889	156.871	-21.2	-14.7	-8.2
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade (4) (5)		195.073	182.288	169.973	-17.0	-12.9	-6.8
Gasoline, unleaded premium (4)		193.853	182.990	171.690	-14.0	-11.4	-6.2
Medical care		489.480		498.090	2.4	1.8	
Recreation (6)		123.357		123.987	0.1	0.5	
Education and communication (6)		134.427		133.729	0.8	-0.5	
Other goods and services		502.938		508.129	10.3	1.0	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		172.518		172.197	-2.1	-0.2	
Commodities less food and beverages		139.812		139.348	-4.9	-0.3	
Nondurables less food and beverages		172.022		169.714	-6.5	-1.3	
Durables		103.074		104.215	-2.2	1.1	
Services		313.248		315.048	1.5	0.6	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter		220.708		221.580	0.0	0.4	
All items less medical care		231.986		232.412	0.1	0.2	
Commodities less food		142.861		142.682	-4.6	-0.1	
Nondurables		203.045		201.795	-2.1	-0.6	

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

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	Dec. 2015	Jan. 2016	Feb. 2016	Feb. 2015	Dec. 2015	Jan. 2016
Nondurables less food.....		175.192		173.577	-6.0	-0.9	
Services less rent of shelter ⁽²⁾		324.847		328.082	2.3	1.0	
Services less medical care services.....		299.494		300.775	1.4	0.4	
Energy		173.634	170.552	165.074	-12.1	-4.9	-3.2
All items less energy		251.757		253.557	1.3	0.7	
All items less food and energy		257.405		259.638	1.2	0.9	

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) 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.