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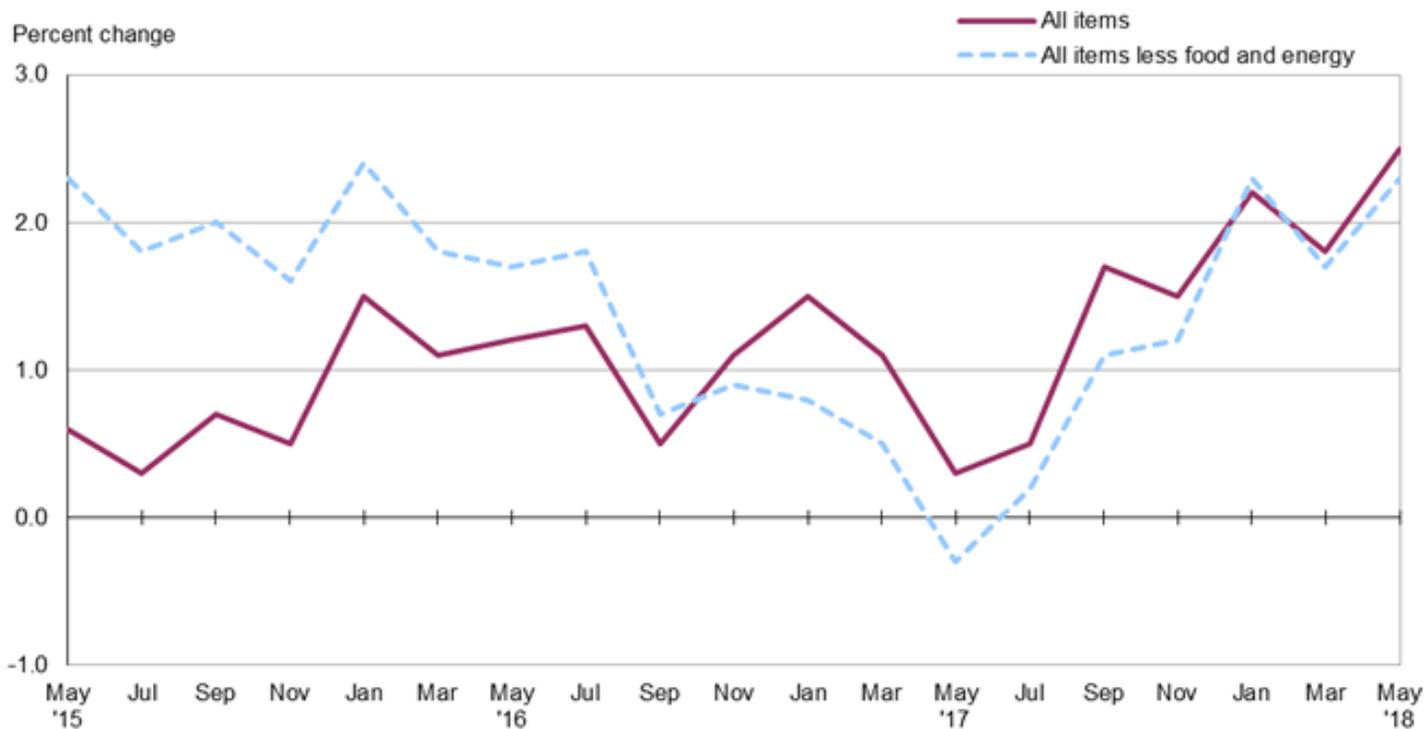
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Consumer Price Index, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria – May 2018 **Area prices up 0.7 percent since March and 2.5 percent over the year**

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria rose 0.7 percent from March to May, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau’s regional commissioner, noted that the recent advance was due largely to a 6.2-percent increase in the energy index. The all items less food and energy index and the food index also increased since March, up 0.2 and 0.8 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 advanced 2.5 percent, mainly reflecting a 2.3-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A.](#)) Since May 2017, the energy index and the food index also increased, up 7.0 and 1.4 percent, respectively. (See [table 1.](#))

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, May 2015–May 2018



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

After a 0.1-percent decrease from January to March, the food index advanced 0.8 percent over the last two months. Prices for food at home were up 1.2 percent and those for food away from home were 0.4 percent higher. Within the food at home component, prices rose since March for various items including spices, seasonings, condiments, and sauces; chicken; and lettuce.

Food prices increased 1.4 percent over the year. Prices were higher for both the food away from home and food at home components, up 1.4 and 1.3 percent, respectively, since May 2017.

Energy

Since March, the energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, advanced 6.2 percent, due mainly to a 10.7-percent increase in gasoline prices. Prices were also higher for utility (piped) gas service and electricity, up 5.3 and 0.4 percent, respectively, over the last two months.

Energy prices rose 7.0 percent over the year. The advance due almost entirely to an 18.4-percent increase in gasoline prices. Prices for electricity inched up 0.1 percent over the year, while prices for utility (piped) gas service declined 13.1 percent.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy edged up 0.2 percent since March. Prices were higher for several categories including shelter (0.2 percent) and household furnishings and operations (1.7 percent); prices declined for several others including used cars and trucks (-1.1 percent) and medical care (-0.3 percent).

Since May 2017, the index for all items less food and energy rose 2.3 percent. The advance was led by higher prices for shelter (2.2 percent); apparel (4.0 percent), household furnishings and operations (4.1 percent), and recreation (2.7 percent) were among the other indexes that had increases over the year.

Table A. Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
	2-month	12-month								
January.....	0.2	1.7	-1.1	-0.2	-0.2	1.5	0.2	1.5	0.9	2.2
March	0.8	1.7	1.2	0.2	0.8	1.1	0.4	1.1	-0.1	1.8
May.....	0.3	2.0	0.7	0.6	0.8	1.2	0.0	0.3	0.7	2.5
July	0.0	1.7	-0.3	0.3	-0.2	1.3	0.0	0.5		
September.....	0.1	1.1	0.6	0.7	-0.3	0.5	0.9	1.7		
November.....	-0.3	1.1	-0.4	0.5	0.2	1.1	0.0	1.5		

The Consumer Price Index for July 2018 is scheduled to be released on Friday, August 10, 2018, at 8:30 a.m. (EDT).

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria 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 94 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 75 urban areas across the country from about 5,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 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/pdf/homch17.pdf.

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-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MA-WV, Core Based Statistical Area** includes the District of Columbia; the counties of Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's in Maryland; the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas, and Manassas Park and the counties of Arlington, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren in Virginia; and the county of Jefferson in West Virginia.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Mar. 2018	Apr. 2018	May 2018	May 2017	Mar. 2018	Apr. 2018
All items.....		260.026		261.770	2.5	0.7	
Food and beverages		247.101		248.848	1.3	0.7	
Food		251.712		253.749	1.4	0.8	
Food at home		240.601	241.256	243.487	1.3	1.2	0.9
Cereals and bakery products		316.301		320.241		1.2	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		262.852		259.952		-1.1	
Dairy and related products		238.366		236.950		-0.6	
Fruits and vegetables		261.109		272.643		4.4	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)		206.111		204.853		-0.6	
Other food at home		195.090		199.769		2.4	
Food away from home.....		266.695		267.640	1.4	0.4	
Alcoholic beverages		202.640		201.507	0.5	-0.6	
Housing		270.687		271.918	2.0	0.5	
Shelter		327.426	327.843	328.186	2.2	0.2	0.1
Rent of primary residence(2).....		356.530	357.225	357.886	2.7	0.4	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2)(3)		333.317	334.144	334.592	2.0	0.4	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)(3).....		333.317	334.144	334.592	2.0	0.4	0.1
Fuels and utilities.....		227.149		229.869	-2.2	1.2	
Household energy		178.277	179.821	180.951	-3.0	1.5	0.6
Energy services(2)		182.453	184.196	185.412	-3.3	1.6	0.7
Electricity(2).....		207.591	209.058	208.407	0.1	0.4	-0.3
Utility (piped) gas service(2).....		125.857	128.006	132.585	-13.1	5.3	3.6
Household furnishings and operations.....		103.538		105.247	4.1	1.7	
Apparel		162.120		163.558	4.0	0.9	
Transportation		215.146		219.936	5.1	2.2	
Private transportation		212.255		218.387	5.7	2.9	
New and used motor vehicles(4).....		93.649		93.354		-0.3	
New vehicles(1).....		196.977		198.041		0.5	
Used cars and trucks(1)		299.073		295.915		-1.1	
Motor fuel		237.519	250.085	262.687	18.3	10.6	5.0
Gasoline (all types).....		234.822	247.399	259.884	18.4	10.7	5.0
Gasoline, unleaded regular(5).....		229.090	241.896	254.184	18.7	11.0	5.1
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(5)(6).....		234.600	243.991	255.406	16.6	8.9	4.7
Gasoline, unleaded premium(5).....		251.018	260.016	272.588	16.0	8.6	4.8
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....		858.198		857.600		-0.1	
Medical care		453.974		452.584	1.3	-0.3	
Recreation(4).....		114.923		114.574	2.7	-0.3	
Education and communication(4).....		152.905		153.398	1.0	0.3	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1).....		1,382.840		1,383.049		0.0	
Other goods and services		404.319		406.817	1.9	0.6	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		179.236		181.680	2.8	1.4	

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, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Mar. 2018	Apr. 2018	May 2018	May 2017	Mar. 2018	Apr. 2018
Commodities less food and beverages		144.497		147.121	3.8	1.8	
Nondurables less food and beverages...		192.331		198.288	6.5	3.1	
Durables		100.599		100.727	0.4	0.1	
Services		333.198		334.141	2.2	0.3	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter		232.901		235.018	2.6	0.9	
All items less medical care		250.862		252.762	2.6	0.8	
Commodities less food		147.189		149.691	3.6	1.7	
Nondurables		218.898		222.810	3.6	1.8	
Nondurables less food		193.039		198.433	6.0	2.8	
Services less rent of shelter(3)		350.863		352.057	2.1	0.3	
Services less medical care services		321.922		322.976	2.3	0.3	
Energy		208.115	214.692	221.053	7.0	6.2	3.0
All items less energy		267.334		268.202	2.2	0.3	
All items less food and energy		271.402		272.062	2.3	0.2	

Footnotes

(1) Indexes on a November 1977=100 base.

(2) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(3) Indexes on a November 1982=100 base.

(4) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

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

(6) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

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