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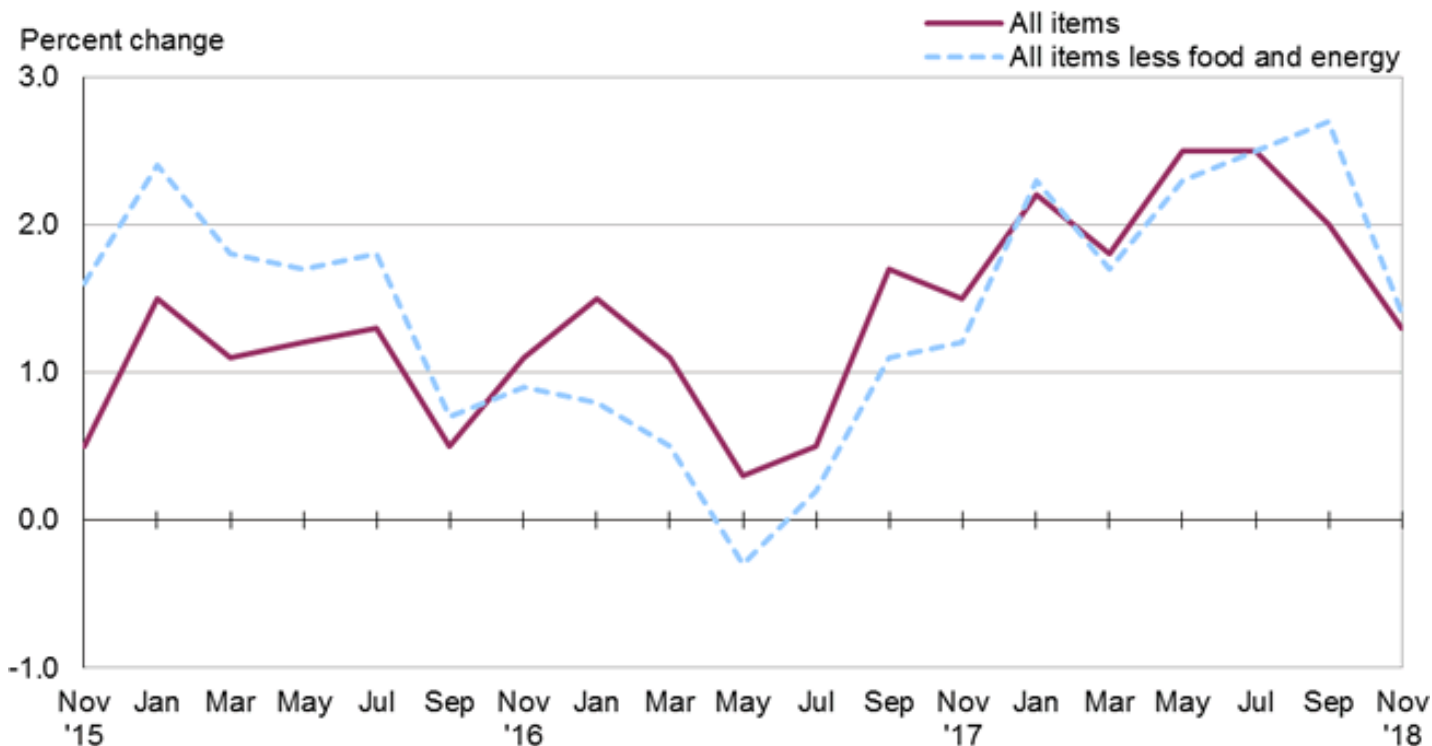
Consumer Price Index, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria – November 2018

Area prices down 0.7 percent since September, up 1.3 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria decreased 0.7 percent from September to November, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau’s regional commissioner, noted that the recent decline was due almost entirely to a 0.8-percent decrease in the all items less food and energy index. The energy index also declined since September, down 1.4 percent, while the food index inched up 0.1 percent. (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 1.3 percent, primarily reflecting a 1.4-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) Since November 2017, the food index also advanced, up 0.8 percent, while the energy index was unchanged. (See [table 1](#).)

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



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

After a 0.2-percent increase from July to September, the food index inched up 0.1 percent over the last two months. Prices for food away from home were up 0.5 percent, while those for food at home were 0.3 percent lower. Within the food at home component, prices were lower for items such as carbonated drinks, uncooked beef steaks, and citrus fruits over the last two months.

Food prices increased 0.8 percent over the year. Prices were higher for both food away from home (1.5 percent) and food at home (0.1 percent) since November 2017.

Energy

Since September, the energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, decreased 1.4 percent, due mostly to a 6.9-percent decrease in gasoline prices. Prices also decreased for electricity (-5.9 percent). Meanwhile, prices for utility (piped) gas service were 75.8 percent higher.

Energy prices were unchanged since November 2017. Declines for both utility (piped) gas service prices (-13.3 percent) and electricity prices (-1.2 percent) were moderated by an increase in gasoline prices (3.7 percent).

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy decreased 0.8 percent since September. A seasonal decrease in apparel prices (-6.7 percent) and lower prices for shelter (-0.8 percent) led the decline in the all items less food and energy index. Prices were also lower for education and communication (-4.0 percent). Prices were higher in several categories, including new and used motor vehicles (1.3 percent) and medical care (1.0 percent), among others.

Since November 2017, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.4 percent. The advance was led by higher prices for shelter (1.5 percent); apparel (7.3 percent) and recreation (3.5 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 | 2-month | 12-month | 2-month | 12-month | 2-month | 12-month | 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 | 0.1 | 2.5 |
| September..... | 0.1 | 1.1 | 0.6 | 0.7 | -0.3 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 1.7 | 0.4 | 2.0 |
| November..... | -0.3 | 1.1 | -0.4 | 0.5 | 0.2 | 1.1 | 0.0 | 1.5 | -0.7 | 1.3 |

The Consumer Price Index for January 2019 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, 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 | Sep. 2018 | Oct. 2018 | Nov. 2018 | Nov. 2017 | Sep. 2018 | Oct. 2018 |
| All items..... | | 263.056 | | 261.120 | 1.3 | -0.7 | |
| Food and beverages | | 248.062 | | 248.224 | 0.9 | 0.1 | |
| Food | | 252.779 | | 252.996 | 0.8 | 0.1 | |
| Food at home | | 240.627 | 242.282 | 239.973 | 0.1 | -0.3 | -1.0 |
| Cereals and bakery products | | 314.023 | | 316.939 | -0.3 | 0.9 | |
| Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs..... | | 259.563 | | 255.519 | 0.5 | -1.6 | |
| Dairy and related products | | 236.961 | | 233.161 | 0.5 | -1.6 | |
| Fruits and vegetables | | 261.176 | | 263.213 | -3.1 | 0.8 | |
| Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1) | | 199.162 | | 204.193 | 0.8 | 2.5 | |
| Other food at home | | 201.763 | | 199.176 | 2.1 | -1.3 | |
| Food away from home..... | | 269.106 | | 270.445 | 1.5 | 0.5 | |
| Alcoholic beverages | | 202.540 | | 202.159 | 2.1 | -0.2 | |
| Housing | | 273.218 | | 272.186 | 1.1 | -0.4 | |
| Shelter | | 333.000 | 331.000 | 330.214 | 1.5 | -0.8 | -0.2 |
| Rent of primary residence | | 360.382 | 360.902 | 361.400 | 1.9 | 0.3 | 0.1 |
| Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2)..... | | 337.187 | 337.319 | 337.752 | 1.7 | 0.2 | 0.1 |
| Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2) | | 337.187 | 337.319 | 337.752 | 1.7 | 0.2 | 0.1 |
| Fuels and utilities..... | | 214.382 | | 224.116 | -2.6 | 4.5 | |
| Household energy | | 164.618 | 176.787 | 173.765 | -4.2 | 5.6 | -1.7 |
| Energy services..... | | 168.369 | 180.938 | 177.675 | -4.3 | 5.5 | -1.8 |
| Electricity | | 219.205 | 218.632 | 206.331 | -1.2 | -5.9 | -5.6 |
| Utility (piped) gas service | | 65.352 | 101.354 | 114.885 | -13.3 | 75.8 | 13.4 |
| Household furnishings and operations..... | | 103.605 | | 103.211 | 1.7 | -0.4 | |
| Apparel | | 177.968 | | 165.956 | 7.3 | -6.7 | |
| Transportation | | 217.636 | | 216.747 | 1.8 | -0.4 | |
| Private transportation | | 216.328 | | 214.310 | 2.1 | -0.9 | |
| New and used motor vehicles(3)..... | | 92.749 | | 93.968 | 1.4 | 1.3 | |
| New vehicles(1)..... | | 197.043 | | 196.752 | 0.1 | -0.1 | |
| Used cars and trucks(1) | | 288.395 | | 294.430 | 2.4 | 2.1 | |
| Motor fuel | | 261.727 | 262.519 | 244.078 | 3.8 | -6.7 | -7.0 |
| Gasoline (all types)..... | | 258.900 | 259.606 | 241.155 | 3.7 | -6.9 | -7.1 |
| Gasoline, unleaded regular(4)..... | | 253.169 | 253.788 | 235.161 | 3.7 | -7.1 | -7.3 |
| Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5)..... | | 255.897 | 257.301 | 243.624 | 5.0 | -4.8 | -5.3 |
| Gasoline, unleaded premium(4)..... | | 271.674 | 272.929 | 258.124 | 3.7 | -5.0 | -5.4 |
| Motor vehicle insurance(1)..... | | 852.769 | | 862.279 | 0.3 | 1.1 | |
| Medical care | | 445.882 | | 450.290 | 0.4 | 1.0 | |
| Recreation(3)..... | | 117.486 | | 115.723 | 3.5 | -1.5 | |
| Education and communication(3)..... | | 156.267 | | 150.041 | -3.2 | -4.0 | |
| Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1)..... | | 1,420.218 | | 1,359.223 | -0.9 | -4.3 | |
| Other goods and services | | 406.715 | | 411.772 | 2.7 | 1.2 | |
| Commodity and service group | | | | | | | |
| Commodities | | 182.283 | | 179.184 | 1.5 | -1.7 | |

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 | Sep. 2018 | Oct. 2018 | Nov. 2018 | Nov. 2017 | Sep. 2018 | Oct. 2018 |
| Commodities less food and beverages |  | 148.259 | | 143.972 | 1.9 | -2.9 | |
| Nondurables less food and beverages... |  | 202.839 | | 193.781 | 3.8 | -4.5 | |
| Durables |  | 99.424 | | 98.751 | -0.7 | -0.7 | |
| Services..... |  | 336.083 | | 335.439 | 1.2 | -0.2 | |
| Special aggregate indexes | | | | | | | |
| All items less shelter..... |  | 234.934 | | 233.335 | 1.2 | -0.7 | |
| All items less medical care |  | 254.443 | | 252.192 | 1.3 | -0.9 | |
| Commodities less food..... |  | 150.830 | | 146.663 | 1.9 | -2.8 | |
| Nondurables |  | 224.769 | | 220.189 | 2.2 | -2.0 | |
| Nondurables less food..... |  | 202.703 | | 194.336 | 3.7 | -4.1 | |
| Services less rent of shelter(2)..... |  | 350.405 | | 352.510 | 0.8 | 0.6 | |
| Services less medical care services..... |  | 325.639 | | 324.473 | 1.2 | -0.4 | |
| Energy |  | 211.437 | 218.636 | 208.559 | 0.0 | -1.4 | -4.6 |
| All items less energy |  | 270.377 | | 268.494 | 1.3 | -0.7 | |
| All items less food and energy |  | 274.817 | | 272.545 | 1.4 | -0.8 | |

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a November 1977=100 base.
- (2) Indexes on a November 1982=100 base.
- (3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.
- (4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
- (5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.