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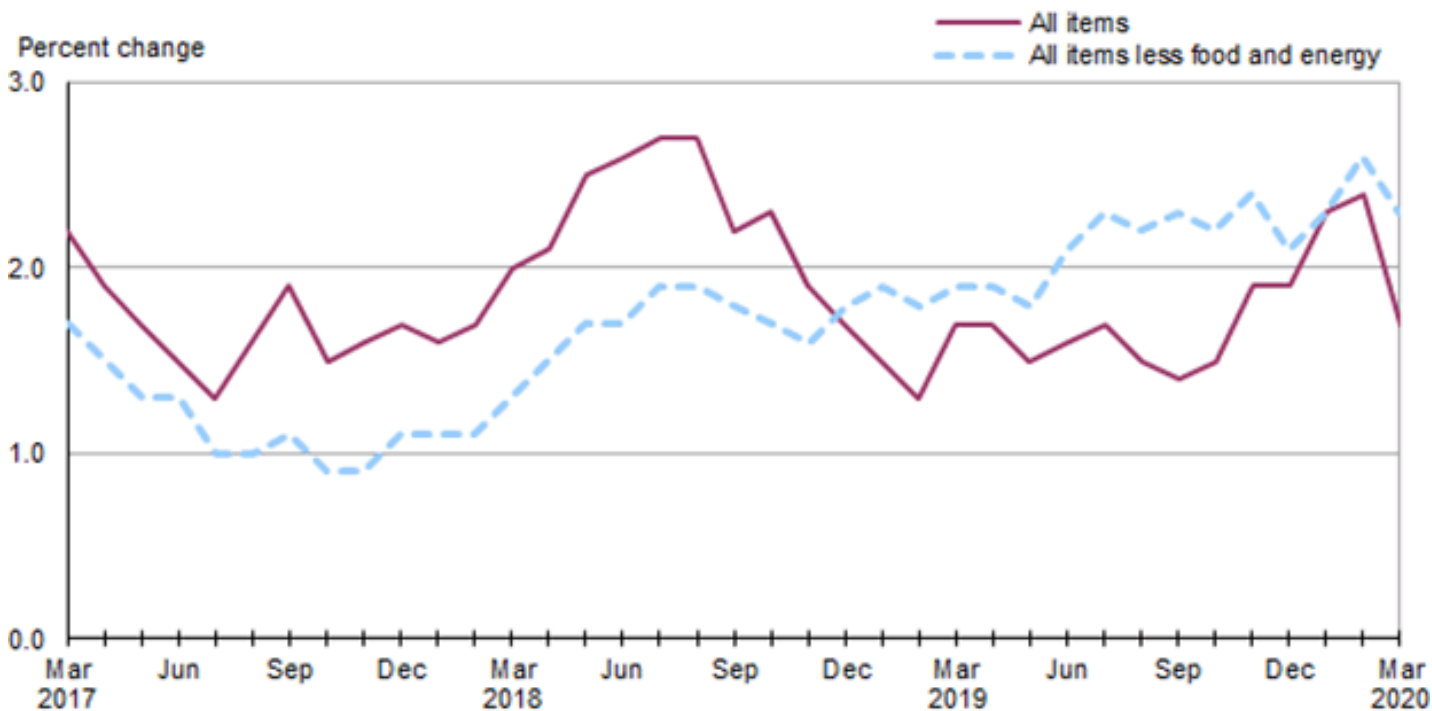
## **Consumer Price Index, Northeast Region – March 2020**

### **Regional prices down 0.2 percent over the month; up 1.7 percent over the year**

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Northeast edged down 0.2 percent in March, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau’s regional commissioner, noted that the recent over-the-month decrease was due entirely to a 4.1-percent decline in the energy index. The food index increased from February to March, up 0.2 percent, while the all items less food and energy index was unchanged. (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 Northeast all items CPI-U increased 1.7 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) This was due largely to an advance in the all items less food and energy index, up 2.3 percent. The food index also rose, up 1.8, while the energy index declined 6.0 percent since March 2019. (See [table 1](#).)

**Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Northeast region, March 2017–March 2020**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## Food

The food index edged up 0.2 percent since February. Prices were higher for both food at home and for food away from home, up 0.2 percent each.

From March 2019 to March 2020, the food index increased 1.8 percent. Prices for food away from home increased over the year, up 3.2 percent; those for food at home also rose, up 0.8 percent.

## Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, declined 4.1 percent in March, due largely to a 6.3-percent decline in gasoline prices. Prices were also lower for electricity (-1.0 percent) and utility (piped) gas service (-0.6 percent) over the month.

The energy index decreased 6.0 percent since March 2019. The decrease reflected lower prices for gasoline (-7.8 percent). Prices for utility (piped) gas service and electricity also decreased over the year, down 5.0 and 1.0 percent, respectively.

## All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy was unchanged over the month. Higher prices for shelter (0.3 percent) and recreation (0.9 percent), among others, were offset by lower prices for new vehicles (-0.6 percent) and education and communication (-0.1 percent).

The index for all items less food and energy increased 2.3 percent since March 2019, led by higher prices for shelter and medical care, up 2.6 and 5.3 percent, respectively. Prices also rose over the year for education and communication (3.0 percent), recreation (2.5 percent), and other goods and services (3.1 percent).

**Table A. Northeast region CPI-U 1-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted**

Month	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month
January.....	0.0	0.7	0.6	2.5	0.5	1.6	0.3	1.5	0.7	2.3
February.....	0.2	0.7	0.3	2.6	0.4	1.7	0.2	1.3	0.3	2.4
March.....	0.2	0.6	-0.1	2.2	0.1	2.0	0.5	1.7	-0.2	1.7
April.....	0.6	1.0	0.3	1.9	0.4	2.1	0.4	1.7		
May.....	0.3	0.9	0.1	1.7	0.4	2.5	0.3	1.5		
June.....	0.2	0.7	0.0	1.5	0.0	2.6	0.1	1.6		
July.....	0.0	0.8	-0.2	1.3	0.0	2.7	0.1	1.7		
August.....	0.1	1.0	0.3	1.6	0.2	2.7	0.1	1.5		
September.....	0.2	1.3	0.5	1.9	0.1	2.2	0.0	1.4		
October.....	0.2	1.6	-0.1	1.5	-0.1	2.3	-0.1	1.5		
November.....	0.0	1.6	0.0	1.6	-0.4	1.9	0.1	1.9		
December.....	0.0	1.9	0.1	1.7	-0.1	1.7	-0.1	1.9		

## Geographic divisions

Additional price indexes are now available for the two divisions of the Northeast. Over the month, the all items CPI-U decreased 0.2 percent in both the New England division and Middle Atlantic division.

Over the year, the all items index advanced 1.5 percent in the New England division. (See [table B.](#)) Prices also rose in the Middle Atlantic division, up 1.8 percent.

**Table B. CPI-U 1-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, Northeast region and divisions, not seasonally adjusted**

Area	1-month change	12-month change
Northeast.....	-0.2	1.7
New England Division .....	-0.2	1.5
Middle Atlantic Division.....	-0.2	1.8

**The Consumer Price Index for April 2020 is scheduled to be released Tuesday, May 12, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. (ET).**

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impact on March 2020 Consumer Price Index Data**

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) program suspended data collection by personal visit on March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in March was affected by the temporary closing or limited operations of certain types of establishments. These factors resulted in an increase in the number of prices being considered temporarily unavailable and imputed. While the CPI program attempted to collect as much data as possible, many indexes are based on smaller amounts of collected prices than usual, and a small number of indexes that are normally published were not published this month. Additional information is available at [www.bls.gov/bls/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-bls-price-indexes.htm#CPI](http://www.bls.gov/bls/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-bls-price-indexes.htm#CPI).

### **Technical Note**

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 93 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 29 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](http://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](http://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 **Northeast region** is comprised of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

The **New England division** is comprised of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

The **Middle Atlantic division** is comprised of New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.


















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**Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Northeast Region, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)**

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2020	Mar. 2019	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020
All items.....		272.316	273.080	272.531	1.7	0.1	-0.2
All items (December 1977 = 100).....		428.815	430.018	429.153			
Food and beverages .....		267.315	267.618	268.092	1.9	0.3	0.2
Food .....		268.003	268.208	268.721	1.8	0.3	0.2
Food at home .....		253.493	253.418	253.922	0.8	0.2	0.2
Cereals and bakery products .....		300.805	299.794	298.906	-0.1	-0.6	-0.3
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		255.132	254.913	256.063	1.6	0.4	0.5
Dairy and related products .....		235.243	236.802	234.361	4.1	-0.4	-1.0
Fruits and vegetables.....		316.676	313.377	313.699	-2.8	-0.9	0.1
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials.....		176.957	178.921	177.412	1.6	0.3	-0.8
Other food at home .....		225.792	226.117	229.146	1.5	1.5	1.3
Food away from home.....		293.045	293.687	294.219	3.2	0.4	0.2
Alcoholic beverages .....		257.401	259.053	258.990	1.9	0.6	0.0
Housing .....		291.320	291.976	292.049	1.7	0.3	0.0
Shelter .....		362.949	364.396	365.343	2.6	0.7	0.3
Rent of primary residence .....		367.151	367.584	368.227	2.9	0.3	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(1).....		375.827	376.663	377.615	2.7	0.5	0.3
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(1) .....		375.520	376.352	377.302	2.7	0.5	0.3
Fuels and utilities.....		231.253	228.767	224.048	-3.5	-3.1	-2.1
Household energy .....		203.988	201.073	196.018	-4.7	-3.9	-2.5
Energy services.....		200.722	200.046	198.364	-2.2	-1.2	-0.8
Electricity .....		205.220	205.296	203.304	-1.0	-0.9	-1.0
Utility (piped) gas service .....		177.069	175.007	174.043	-5.0	-1.7	-0.6
Household furnishings and operations.....		120.048	120.218	120.472	-0.6	0.4	0.2
Apparel.....		124.311	130.779	130.385	-0.1	4.9	-0.3
Transportation .....		205.706	205.178	200.823	-1.9	-2.4	-2.1
Private transportation .....		197.770	196.774	194.453	-1.4	-1.7	-1.2
New and used motor vehicles(2).....		95.483	95.935	96.408	-0.4	1.0	0.5
New vehicles .....		144.655	145.294	144.375	-0.3	-0.2	-0.6
New cars and trucks(2)(3).....		100.229	100.675	100.063	-0.3	-0.2	-0.6
New cars(3).....		134.340	135.139	133.994	0.2	-0.3	-0.8
Used cars and trucks.....		142.295	143.849	146.882	0.5	3.2	2.1
Motor fuel .....		225.044	216.622	203.111	-7.8	-9.7	-6.2
Gasoline (all types).....		223.893	215.507	201.992	-7.8	-9.8	-6.3
Gasoline, unleaded regular(3).....		220.991	212.365	198.608	-8.2	-10.1	-6.5
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(3)(4).....		239.856	232.875	221.847	-5.1	-7.5	-4.7
Gasoline, unleaded premium(3).....		234.801	228.561	217.336	-5.3	-7.4	-4.9
Motor vehicle insurance(5).....		630.155	635.676	636.101	2.0	0.9	0.1
Medical care .....		542.206	544.627	545.933	5.3	0.7	0.2
Medical care commodities.....		396.371	396.347	393.296	-2.8	-0.8	-0.8
Medical care services.....		584.522	587.696	590.365	7.1	1.0	0.5
Professional services .....		397.084	398.861	400.697	3.7	0.9	0.5
Recreation(2).....		127.234	127.218	128.309	2.5	0.8	0.9
Education and communication(2).....		147.047	147.120	146.924	3.0	-0.1	-0.1

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, Northeast Region, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued**

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2020	Mar. 2019	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(5) .....		1,293.908	1,300.223	1,301.033	3.9	0.6	0.1
Other goods and services .....		506.971	509.062	509.650	3.1	0.5	0.1
<b>Commodity and service group</b>							
Commodities .....		191.117	191.386	190.212	-0.4	-0.5	-0.6
Commodities less food and beverages .....		150.717	150.960	149.178	-1.9	-1.0	-1.2
Nondurables less food and beverages...		196.237	195.906	191.808	-2.7	-2.3	-2.1
Durables .....		100.948	101.550	101.562	-0.8	0.6	0.0
Services.....		350.229	351.467	351.513	2.7	0.4	0.0
<b>Special aggregate indexes</b>							
All items less shelter.....		241.027	241.550	240.467	1.2	-0.2	-0.4
All items less medical care .....		260.415	261.105	260.472	1.3	0.0	-0.2
Commodities less food .....		154.550	154.832	153.086	-1.7	-0.9	-1.1
Nondurables .....		231.429	231.403	229.494	-0.2	-0.8	-0.8
Nondurables less food.....		199.806	199.592	195.736	-2.3	-2.0	-1.9
Services less rent of shelter(1).....		348.497	349.535	348.615	2.7	0.0	-0.3
Services less medical care services.....		334.087	335.191	335.057	2.2	0.3	0.0
Energy .....		212.595	207.448	198.967	-6.0	-6.4	-4.1
All items less energy .....		281.225	282.537	282.702	2.2	0.5	0.1
All items less food and energy .....		285.362	286.879	286.984	2.3	0.6	0.0

Footnotes

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