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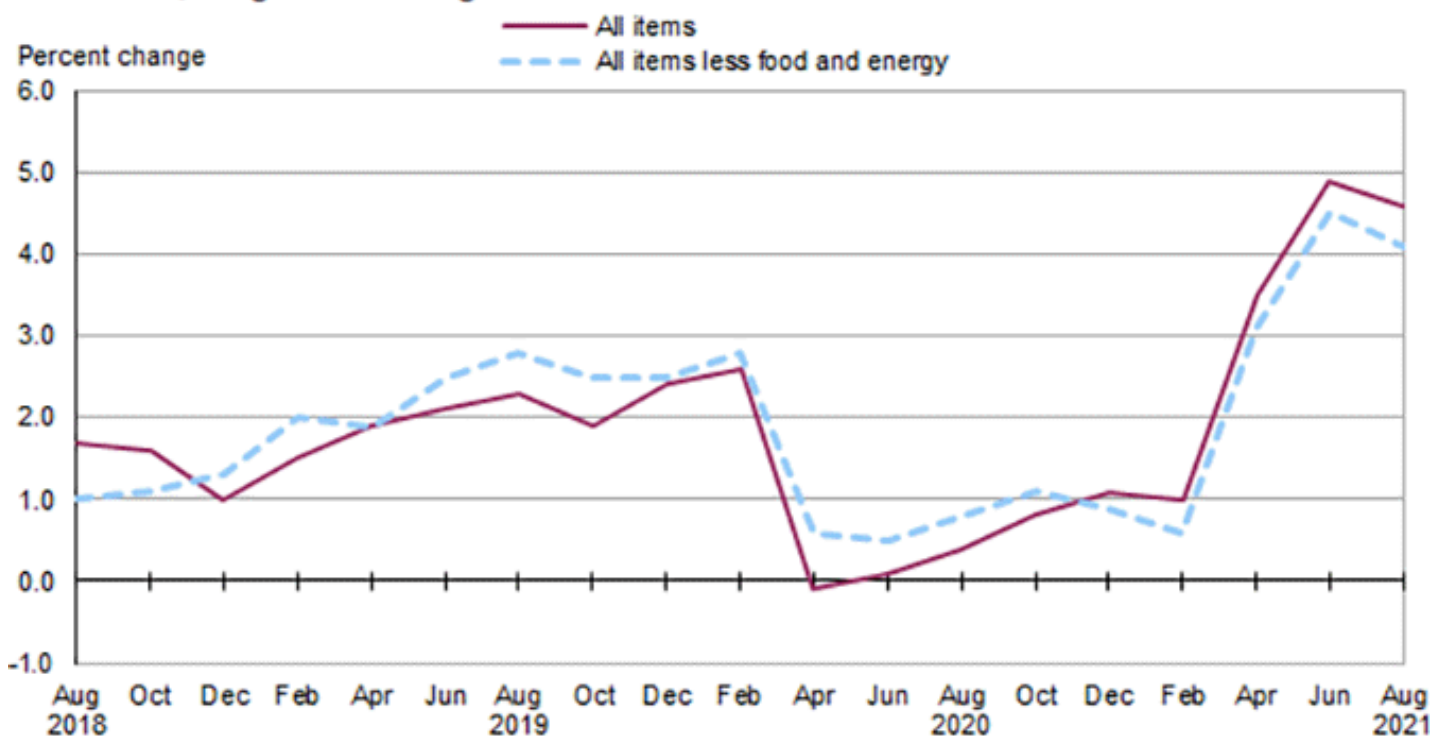
Consumer Price Index, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington – August 2021

Area prices up 0.6 percent since June; up 4.6 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington increased 0.6 percent from June to August, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Alexandra Hall Bovee noted that the recent increase was the smallest of 2021 and was due largely to an increase in the all items less food and energy index (0.5 percent). The energy index and the food index also increased over the 2-month period, up 2.4 and 0.2 percent, respectively. Across the subcomponents of the major category of all items less food and energy and the overall food group, there were a number of indexes where prices declined since June. (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 rose 4.6 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) The over-the-year rise was due largely to an increase in the all items less food and energy index (4.1 percent). The energy index and the food index also increased since August 2020, up 19.3 and 1.7 percent, respectively. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD, August 2018–August 2021



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

The food index increased 0.2 percent over the last 2 months following 2-month increases of 1.4 and 1.2 percent in April and June, respectively. Prices for food away from home rose 1.0 percent since June, while those for food at home decreased 0.5 percent after increases of 1.2 percent in April and 2.2 percent in June. Within the food at home component, prices were lower for items such as breakfast cereal and rice, pasta, cornmeal; while prices were higher for pork chops and eggs.

Over the year, the food index increased 1.7 percent, the fastest rate of 2021 so far. Prices for food away from home rose just 3.1 percent, the smallest over-the-year increase since an identical rise in December 2019, and those for food at home were up 0.5 percent, reversing the trend for much of 2021 where the price index was lower than the previous year.

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, increased 2.4 percent since June. The 2-month increase reflected a 3.4-percent rise in gasoline prices. Prices were also higher for utility (piped) gas service, up 4.3 percent, and electricity, up 0.5 percent since June.

Over the year, the energy index advanced 19.3 percent, led by a 37.0-percent jump in gasoline prices, in line with exceptionally high increases in April and June. Prices were also higher for electricity, up 1.4 percent – the largest 12-month increase since an extremely high change of 29.7 percent in January 2020, and for utility (piped) gas service, up 3.2 percent over the year following declines that began in December 2019.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.5 percent from June to August. Higher prices for shelter (0.8 percent) and new vehicles (2.2 percent) were moderated by lower prices for medical care (-1.5 percent) and public transportation.

Since August 2020, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 4.1 percent. Prices were higher for new and used motor vehicles (24.7 percent, below the record increase in June), particularly those for used cars and trucks (32.3 percent following a record 45.3 percent jump in June), along with prices for household furnishings and operations (12.4 percent).

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

Month	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month
February	0.7	2.1	0.4	0.5	0.8	1.5	1.0	2.6	0.8	1.0
April	0.0	1.3	0.9	1.4	1.3	1.9	-1.3	-0.1	1.2	3.5
June	-0.3	0.7	0.2	1.9	0.5	2.1	0.6	0.1	1.9	4.9
August	0.5	1.4	0.3	1.7	0.5	2.3	0.8	0.4	0.6	4.6
October	0.0	0.8	0.0	1.6	-0.4	1.9	0.0	0.8		
December	-0.1	0.8	-0.7	1.0	-0.3	2.4	0.0	1.1		

The Consumer Price Index for October 2021 is scheduled to be released Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 8:30 am (ET).

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Impact on August 2021 Consumer Price Index Data

Data collection by personal visit for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) program has been suspended since March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in August 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 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/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-consumer-price-index.htm.

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington 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 93 percent of the total U.S. population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 29 percent of the total U.S. 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; for most of the CPI-U the reference base is 1982-84 equals 100. An increase of 7 percent from the reference base, for example, is shown as 107.000. Alternatively, that relationship can also be expressed as the price of a base period market basket of goods and services rising from \$100 to \$107. For further details see the CPI home page on the internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the CPI section of the BLS Handbook of Methods available on the internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/cpi/. 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-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD, Core Based Statistical Area** includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania; Burlington, Camden, 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-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jun. 2021	Jul. 2021	Aug. 2021	Aug. 2020	Jun. 2021	Jul. 2021
All items.....		270.499		272.044	4.6	0.6	
All items (1967 = 100).....		781.455		785.921			
Food and beverages.....		251.504		252.028	1.7	0.2	
Food.....		252.233		252.659	1.7	0.2	
Food at home.....		252.121	250.363	250.781	0.5	-0.5	0.2
Cereals and bakery products.....		329.566		322.289	-1.4	-2.2	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		295.828		300.504	8.7	1.6	
Dairy and related products.....		204.327		203.588	-1.6	-0.4	
Fruits and vegetables.....		275.783		257.132	-5.5	-6.8	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1).....		170.638		171.953	0.9	0.8	
Other food at home.....		221.028		226.513	-0.8	2.5	
Food away from home.....		246.195		248.717	3.1	1.0	
Alcoholic beverages.....		238.375		240.393	3.1	0.8	
Housing.....		277.690		280.380	3.3	1.0	
Shelter.....		344.373	347.101	347.168	1.7	0.8	0.0
Rent of primary residence.....		324.064	325.402	326.468	2.6	0.7	0.3
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....		354.398	355.378	355.879	0.8	0.4	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2).....		354.398	355.378	355.879	0.8	0.4	0.1
Fuels and utilities.....		212.873		215.703	5.3	1.3	
Household energy.....		171.720	175.400	174.345	6.0	1.5	-0.6
Energy services.....		180.200	182.987	183.051	1.9	1.6	0.0
Electricity.....		182.050	182.671	182.882	1.4	0.5	0.1
Utility (piped) gas service.....		164.267	171.503	171.250	3.2	4.3	-0.1
Household furnishings and operations.....		128.208		130.320	12.4	1.6	
Apparel.....		107.951		109.781	2.3	1.7	
Transportation.....		238.189		239.394	17.5	0.5	
Private transportation.....		243.756		246.861	19.4	1.3	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....		123.972		124.773	24.7	0.6	
New vehicles(1).....		207.562		212.134	20.8	2.2	
Used cars and trucks(1).....		367.957		366.567	32.3	-0.4	
Motor fuel.....		285.626	291.477	295.323	37.0	3.4	1.3
Gasoline (all types).....		282.217	288.004	291.875	37.0	3.4	1.3
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		278.607	284.539	288.299	37.6	3.5	1.3
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		289.291	294.165	298.758	34.1	3.3	1.6
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		284.908	289.415	293.654	33.6	3.1	1.5
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....		653.356		658.517	-7.2	0.8	
Medical care.....		572.833		564.402	0.0	-1.5	
Recreation(3).....		128.137		127.160	0.8	-0.8	
Education and communication(3).....		134.206		136.208	2.1	1.5	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1).....		1,069.904		1,089.373	3.9	1.8	
Other goods and services.....		586.000		595.343	5.5	1.6	
Commodity and service group							

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-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Jun. 2021	Jul. 2021	Aug. 2021	Aug. 2020	Jun. 2021	Jul. 2021
Commodities		197.900		199.563	9.6	0.8	
Commodities less food and beverages		167.075		169.139	15.2	1.2	
Nondurables less food and beverages...		200.359		203.469	9.9	1.6	
Durables		125.249		126.361	21.6	0.9	
Services.....		343.547		344.964	1.9	0.4	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		246.213		247.338	6.1	0.5	
All items less medical care		257.717		259.685	5.1	0.8	
Commodities less food		169.919		171.995	14.7	1.2	
Nondurables		227.075		228.937	5.3	0.8	
Nondurables less food.....		202.663		205.717	9.4	1.5	
Services less rent of shelter(2).....		350.318		350.286	2.1	0.0	
Services less medical care services.....		325.736		327.553	1.9	0.6	
Energy		212.878	217.342	218.066	19.3	2.4	0.3
All items less energy		279.097		280.330	3.7	0.4	
All items less food and energy		286.441		287.838	4.1	0.5	

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a December 1977=100 base
- (2) Indexes on a December 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.