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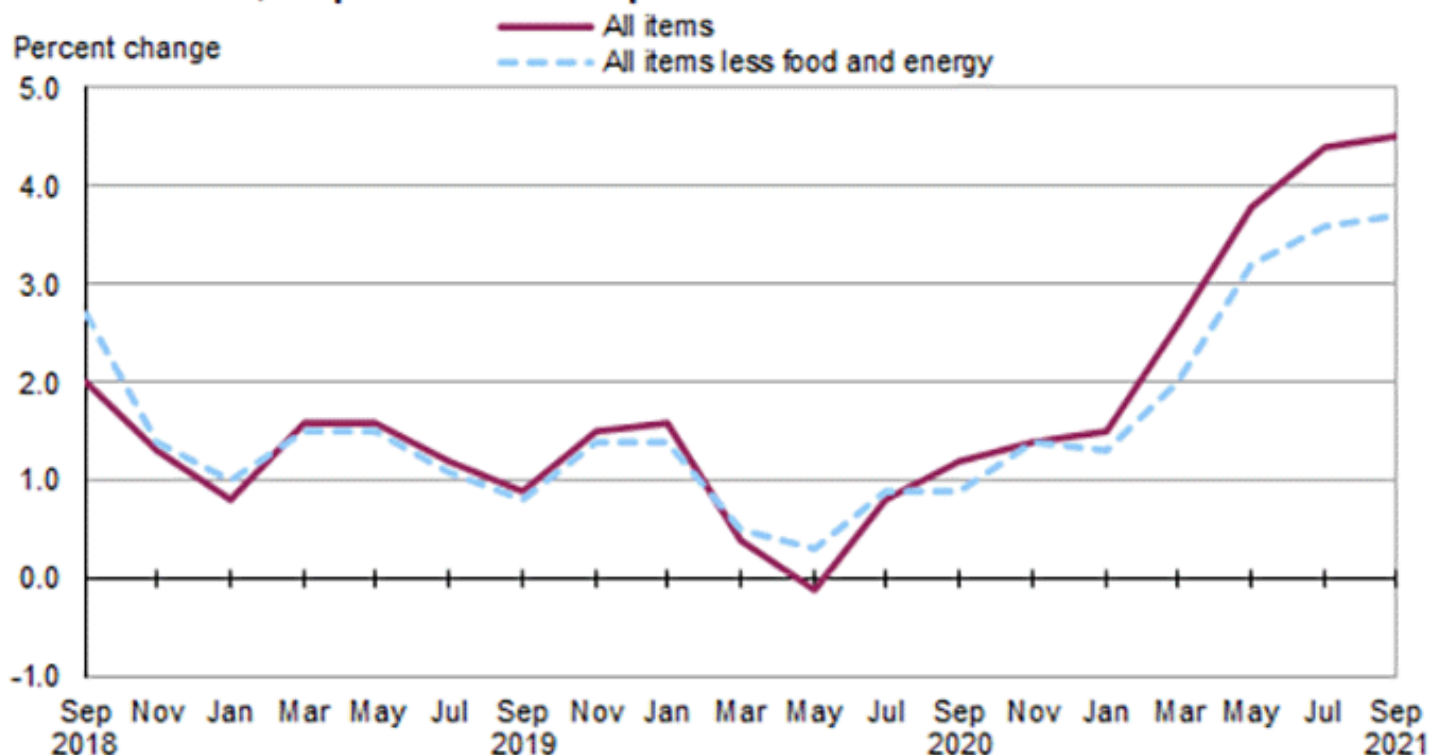
## **Consumer Price Index, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria – September 2021**

### **Area prices up 0.7 percent since July, 4.5 percent over the year**

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria increased 0.7 percent from July to September, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Alexandra Hall Bovee noted that the recent increase was well below the 1.3 and 1.2 percent changes in May and July, respectively. The more moderate change was largely due to a rise in the all items less food and energy index, up 0.6 percent. The food index also increased since July, up 1.9 percent, while the energy index declined 1.8 percent over the 2-month period. (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 4.5 percent, the largest year-over-year increase since 2008. The rise was due mostly to a 3.7-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index, the largest 12-month increase since early in 2007. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A.](#)) Since September 2020, the energy index and the food index also increased, up 21.7 and 3.7 percent, respectively. (See [table 1.](#))

**Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, September 2018–September 2021**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## Food

Following a 1.5-percent increase from May to July, the food index advanced 1.9 percent over the last 2 months. Prices for food at home increased 2.1 percent, and those for food away from home rose 1.6 percent. Within the food at home component, prices were higher for uncooked beef steaks, among other items, while prices were lower for several categories including breakfast cereal and lettuce.

Food prices advanced 3.7 percent over the year after more moderate 12-month increases in May and July. Prices were higher for both food away from home (5.5 percent) and for food at home (1.9 percent) since September 2020.

## Energy

Since July, the energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, decreased 1.8 percent, reflecting lower prices for utility (piped) gas service (-11.1 percent) and electricity (-1.0 percent) over the past 2 months. While prices were higher for gasoline (0.3 percent), that was the smallest 2-month change so far in 2021. The decline in energy prices was the first so far in 2021.

Energy prices rose 21.7 percent since September 2020. The rise was due almost entirely to higher gasoline prices, up 36.8 percent although that was the most moderate over-the-year increase since March. Over the year, prices also increased for utility (piped) gas service, up 21.0 percent, and for electricity, up 3.8 percent.

### All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy rose 0.6 percent since July. The advance was led by higher prices for shelter (1.0 percent), led the owners' equivalent rent of residences index (0.9 percent). Prices were also higher for education and communication (2.5 percent) and apparel (4.2 percent). Prices for used cars and trucks, which had 2-month increases between 2.5 and 17 percent over the previous 6 months were down 4.7 percent and public transportation prices also dropped, down 9.0 percent, helping to offset the overall increase since July.

Since September 2020, the index for all items less food and energy rose 3.7 percent. Prices were higher over the year for new and used motor vehicles (17.4 percent), due mostly to earlier large increases for used cars and trucks (25.0 percent). Prices also increased for shelter (1.9 percent) and recreation (7.0 percent) since September 2020.

**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	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
January.....	0.2	1.5	0.9	2.2	0.5	0.8	0.5	1.6	0.7	1.5
March .....	0.4	1.1	-0.1	1.8	0.7	1.6	-0.4	0.4	0.7	2.6
May.....	0.0	0.3	0.7	2.5	0.6	1.6	0.1	-0.1	1.3	3.8
July .....	0.0	0.5	0.1	2.5	-0.3	1.2	0.6	0.8	1.2	4.4
September.....	0.9	1.7	0.4	2.0	0.1	0.9	0.6	1.2	0.7	4.5
November.....	0.0	1.5	-0.7	1.3	-0.2	1.5	0.0	1.4		

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

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Impact on September 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 September 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](http://www.bls.gov/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-consumer-price-index.htm)

## 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 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 6,000 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](http://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/](http://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 **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	Jul. 2021	Aug. 2021	Sep. 2021	Sep. 2020	Jul. 2021	Aug. 2021
All items.....		279.099		280.933	4.5	0.7	
Food and beverages .....		269.241		274.070	3.6	1.8	
Food .....		276.611		281.734	3.7	1.9	
Food at home .....		255.928	258.481	261.302	1.9	2.1	1.1
Cereals and bakery products .....		332.785		333.423	0.8	0.2	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		287.930		301.436	8.9	4.7	
Dairy and related products .....		243.100		247.965	-1.2	2.0	
Fruits and vegetables .....		266.037		270.677	1.3	1.7	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1) .....		225.132		224.408	0.9	-0.3	
Other food at home .....		210.211		214.085	-2.2	1.8	
Food away from home.....		302.782		307.683	5.5	1.6	
Alcoholic beverages .....		200.346		202.667	2.5	1.2	
Housing .....		289.367		291.460	2.7	0.7	
Shelter .....		344.851	345.876	348.438	1.9	1.0	0.7
Rent of primary residence .....		376.998	377.453	377.966	-0.5	0.3	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....		353.149	354.497	356.240	1.6	0.9	0.5
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2) .....		353.149	354.497	356.240	1.6	0.9	0.5
Fuels and utilities.....		262.851		255.139	7.9	-2.9	
Household energy .....		205.462	203.570	197.234	8.6	-4.0	-3.1
Energy services.....		210.935	208.817	201.829	8.5	-4.3	-3.3
Electricity .....		220.790	221.202	218.674	3.8	-1.0	-1.1
Utility (piped) gas service .....		177.531	171.492	157.863	21.0	-11.1	-7.9
Household furnishings and operations .....		116.723		118.137	4.9	1.2	
Apparel .....		150.056		156.354	1.6	4.2	
Transportation .....		238.844		234.184	12.3	-2.0	
Private transportation .....		246.441		244.199	15.1	-0.9	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....		115.437		113.192	17.4	-1.9	
New vehicles(1).....		208.571		212.762	10.5	2.0	
Used cars and trucks(1) .....		430.623		410.489	25.0	-4.7	
Motor fuel .....		289.802	291.129	290.520	36.7	0.2	-0.2
Gasoline (all types).....		286.796	288.071	287.525	36.8	0.3	-0.2
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		280.275	281.489	280.947	37.9	0.2	-0.2
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		293.692	295.523	294.894	32.2	0.4	-0.2
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		304.597	306.124	305.632	29.8	0.3	-0.2
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....		822.360		827.287	2.1	0.6	
Medical care .....		498.539		501.250	1.3	0.5	
Recreation(3).....		118.505		119.315	7.0	0.7	
Education and communication(3).....		157.681		161.632	3.6	2.5	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1) .....		1,456.345		1,505.907	4.8	3.4	
Other goods and services .....		454.844		452.985	5.8	-0.4	
<b>Commodity and service group</b>							
Commodities .....		194.259		196.325	7.3	1.1	

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, 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	Jul. 2021	Aug. 2021	Sep. 2021	Sep. 2020	Jul. 2021	Aug. 2021
Commodities less food and beverages .....		156.423		157.158	10.5	0.5	
Nondurables less food and beverages...		199.425		202.419	9.3	1.5	
Durables .....		114.111		113.411	11.8	-0.6	
Services .....		355.176		356.617	2.9	0.4	
<b>Special aggregate indexes</b>							
All items less shelter .....		252.093		253.303	5.8	0.5	
All items less medical care .....		268.729		270.522	4.8	0.7	
Commodities less food .....		158.368		159.183	10.0	0.5	
Nondurables .....		233.402		237.324	5.8	1.7	
Nondurables less food .....		199.036		201.944	8.5	1.5	
Services less rent of shelter(2) .....		378.685		377.697	4.0	-0.3	
Services less medical care services .....		340.493		341.882	3.1	0.4	
Energy .....		246.669	246.143	242.173	21.7	-1.8	-1.6
All items less energy .....		285.427		287.708	3.7	0.8	
All items less food and energy .....		288.213		289.913	3.7	0.6	

**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.