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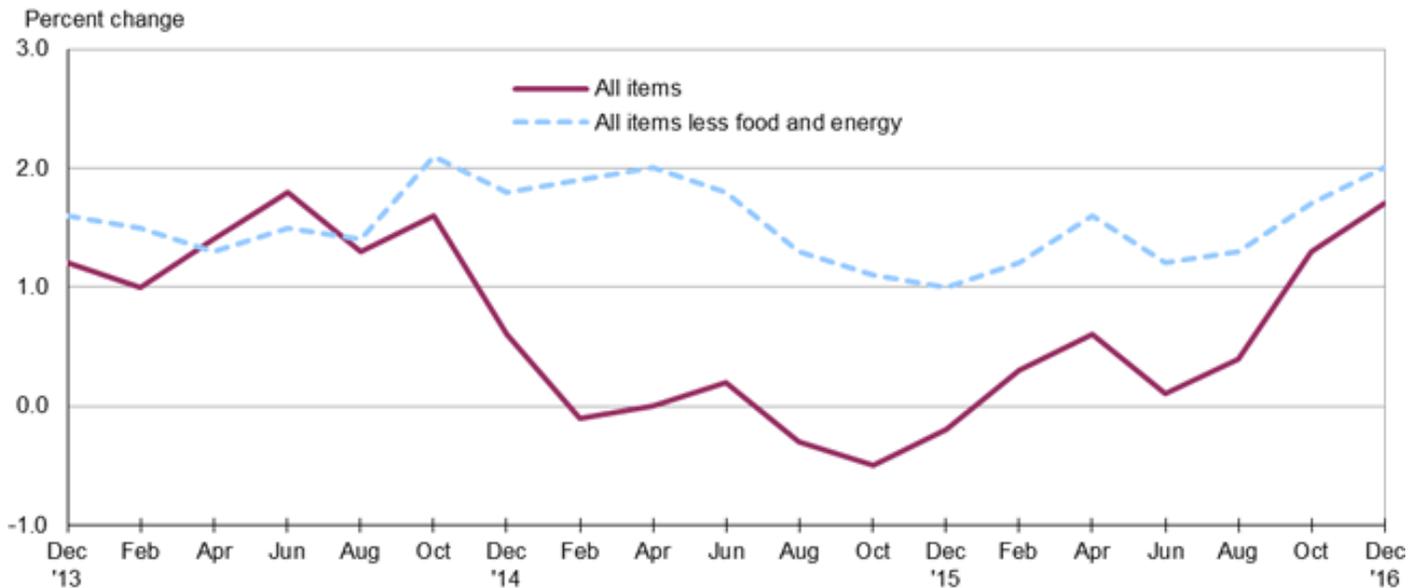
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**Consumer Price Index, Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City – December 2016**  
**Area prices down 0.1 percent since October and up 1.7 percent over the year**

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City inched down 0.1 percent over the last two months, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that the recent decrease was led by a decline in the all items less food and energy index (-0.3 percent); the food index also declined (-0.8 percent). Meanwhile, the energy index advanced 2.4 percent since October. (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 1.7 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) The advance was due mostly to a 2.0-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index. The energy index rose 4.9 percent, while the food index declined 1.6 percent over the year. (See [table 1](#).)

**Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Philadelphia, December 2013–December 2016**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## Food

After recording no change from August to October, the food index declined 0.8 percent since October. Prices were lower for food at home, down 1.5 percent, while those for food away from home inched up 0.1 percent over the last two months.

The food index decreased 1.6 percent over the year. Prices for food at home declined 3.6 percent, while those for food away from home increased 1.5 percent since last December.

## Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, advanced 2.4 percent since October. This was due largely to higher prices for gasoline, up 6.7 percent over the last two months. Prices for utility (piped) gas service also increased since October, up 1.8 percent, while those for electricity declined, down 1.5 percent.

Over the year, the energy index rose 4.9 percent, led by an 11.9-percent advance in gasoline prices. This was the largest over-the-year increase for each of these indexes since February 2012. Prices were also higher for utility (piped) gas service (6.2 percent), while those for electricity declined 2.8 percent over the year.

## All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy declined 0.3 percent from October to December. A seasonal decrease in apparel prices (-7.1 percent) and lower medical care prices (-2.4 percent) were the main contributors to the two-month decline. Higher prices for shelter (0.6 percent) moderated the decrease in the all items less food and energy index since October.

Since December 2015, the index for all items less food and energy rose 2.0 percent. Prices were higher for a number of indexes including shelter (2.3 percent), apparel (8.1 percent), and medical care (2.3 percent). Lower prices for recreation (-0.5 percent), among others, moderated the 12-month increase in the all items less food and energy index.

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

Month	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
	2-month	12-month								
February.....	0.7	2.2	0.7	1.8	0.5	1.0	-0.2	-0.1	0.3	0.3
April.....	0.8	2.0	0.1	1.1	0.5	1.4	0.5	0.0	0.9	0.6
June.....	-0.2	1.3	0.3	1.5	0.6	1.8	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.1
August.....	0.9	1.4	0.5	1.1	0.0	1.3	-0.5	-0.3	-0.2	0.3
October.....	0.4	2.2	-0.4	0.3	-0.1	1.6	-0.3	-0.5	0.6	1.3
December.....	-0.9	1.8	0.1	1.2	-0.8	0.6	-0.6	-0.2	-0.1	1.7

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**The Consumer Price Index for February 2017 is scheduled to be released Wednesday, March 15, 2017 at 8:30 am (ET).**

### **Technical Note**

The Consumer Price Index for Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City 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 89 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 87 urban areas across the country from about 4,000 housing units and approximately 26,000 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 **Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md., Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania; Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, 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-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md., (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)**

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Oct. 2016	Nov. 2016	Dec. 2016	Dec. 2015	Oct. 2016	Nov. 2016
All items.....		246.952		246.591	1.7	-0.1	
All items (1967 = 100).....		713.431		712.388			
Food and beverages.....		232.155		230.329	-1.3	-0.8	
Food.....		231.922		230.006	-1.6	-0.8	
Food at home.....		239.632	237.762	236.044	-3.6	-1.5	-0.7
Food away from home.....		216.105		216.429	1.5	0.1	
Alcoholic beverages.....		231.929		231.177	2.3	-0.3	
Housing.....		252.546		253.626	1.9	0.4	
Shelter.....		313.964	314.931	315.978	2.3	0.6	0.3
Rent of primary residence <sup>(1)</sup> .....		290.616	291.755	292.277	1.4	0.6	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of residences <sup>(1) (2) (3)</sup> ...		322.162	322.910	324.006	2.0	0.6	0.3
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence <sup>(1) (2) (3)</sup> .....		322.162	322.910	324.006	2.0	0.6	0.3
Fuels and utilities.....		199.711		199.105	0.7	-0.3	
Household energy.....		165.697	164.949	165.066	0.5	-0.4	0.1
Gas (piped) and electricity <sup>(1)</sup> .....		177.470	176.985	176.556	-0.2	-0.5	-0.2
Electricity <sup>(1)</sup> .....		187.918	186.574	185.093	-2.8	-1.5	-0.8
Utility (piped) gas service <sup>(1)</sup> .....		147.993	149.125	150.670	6.2	1.8	1.0
Household furnishings and operations.....		113.656		113.038	-0.4	-0.5	
<b>Apparel</b> .....		118.777		110.286	8.1	-7.1	
Transportation.....		201.027		203.254	3.6	1.1	
Private transportation.....		199.308		202.752	3.9	1.7	
Motor fuel.....		198.916	204.463	212.174	11.8	6.7	3.8
Gasoline (all types).....		196.160	201.684	209.259	11.9	6.7	3.8
Gasoline, unleaded regular <sup>(4)</sup> .....		192.803	198.230	206.202	12.2	6.9	4.0

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Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Oct. 2016	Nov. 2016	Dec. 2016	Dec. 2015	Oct. 2016	Nov. 2016
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade <sup>(4)</sup> <sup>(5)</sup> .....		204.491	210.346	216.396	10.9	5.8	2.9
Gasoline, unleaded premium <sup>(4)</sup> .....		203.023	208.700	213.566	10.2	5.2	2.3
<b>Medical care</b>		513.147		500.731	2.3	-2.4	
<b>Recreation <sup>(6)</sup></b>		121.863		122.801	-0.5	0.8	
<b>Education and communication <sup>(6)</sup></b>		133.979		134.539	0.1	0.4	
<b>Other goods and services</b>		527.603		526.333	4.7	-0.2	
Commodity and service group.....							
Commodities.....		176.633		174.345	1.1	-1.3	
Commodities less food and beverages.....		145.803		143.453	2.6	-1.6	
Nondurables less food and beverages.....		184.871		181.529	5.5	-1.8	
Durables.....		102.815		101.468	-1.6	-1.3	
Services.....		318.418		319.807	2.1	0.4	
Special aggregate indexes.....							
All items less shelter.....		225.199		223.939	1.5	-0.6	
All items less medical care.....		235.739		235.919	1.7	0.1	
Commodities less food.....		148.869		146.559	2.6	-1.6	
Nondurables.....		209.668		206.963	1.9	-1.3	
Nondurables less food.....		187.614		184.430	5.3	-1.7	
Services less rent of shelter <sup>(2)</sup> .....		330.225		330.939	1.9	0.2	
Services less medical care services.....		303.975		305.719	2.1	0.6	
Energy.....		177.849	179.317	182.110	4.9	2.4	1.6
All items less energy.....		256.430		255.563	1.5	-0.3	

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Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Oct. 2016	Nov. 2016	Dec. 2016	Dec. 2015	Oct. 2016	Nov. 2016
All items less food and energy.....		263.211		262.508	2.0	-0.3	

- (1) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.
  - (2) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.
  - (3) This index series underwent a change in composition in January 2010. The expenditure class now includes weight from secondary residences, and has been re-titled "Owners' equivalent rent of residences." The item stratum "Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence" excludes secondary residences.
  - (4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
  - (5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.
  - (6) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.
- Note: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.