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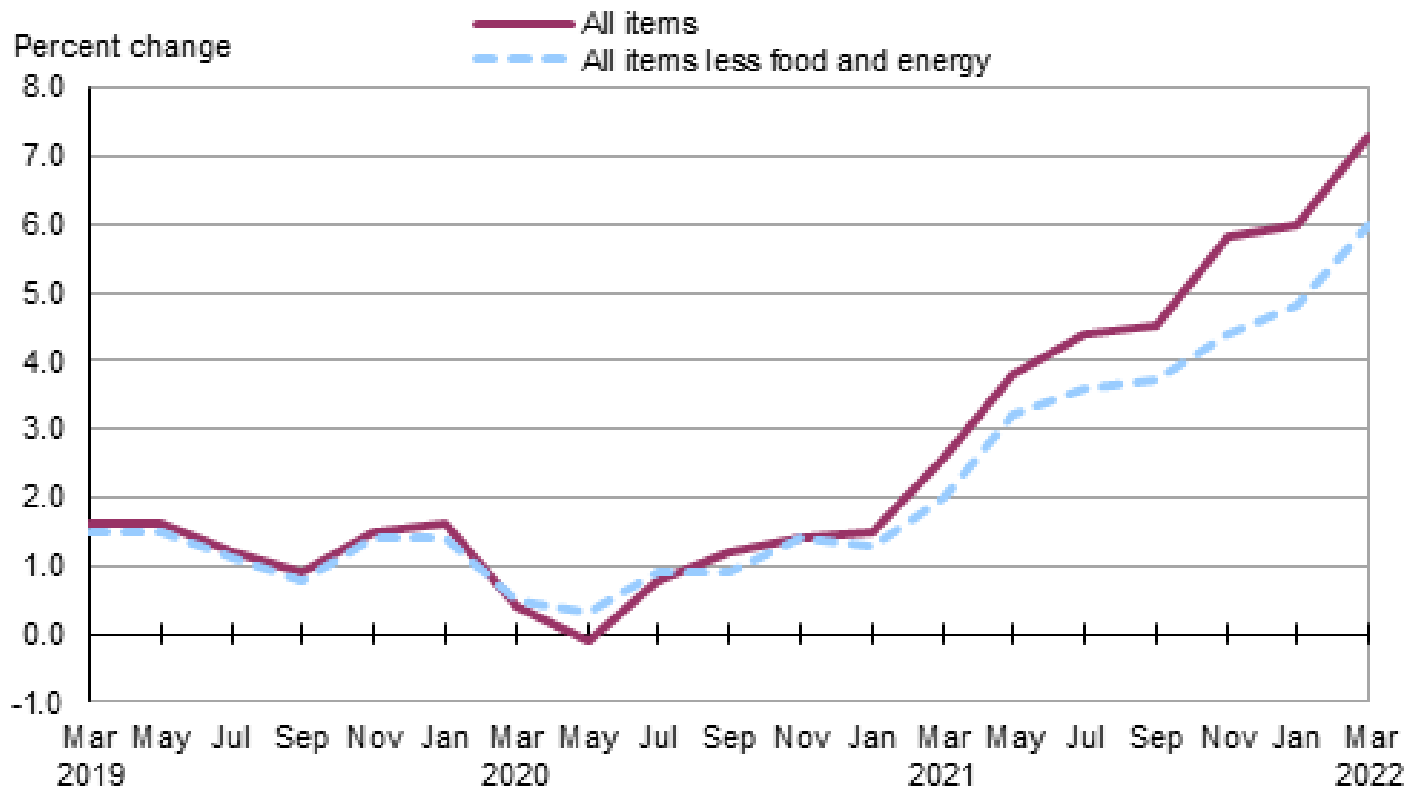
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## **Consumer Price Index, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria area – March 2022** **Area prices were up 1.9 percent over the past two months, up 7.3 percent from a year ago**

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria increased 1.9 percent for the 2 months ending in March 2022, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Alexandra Hall Bovee noted the change was the largest since 2008 and was largely due to a rise in the all items less food and energy index, up 1.5 percent, led by a 4.5 percent jump in medical care and a 1.0 percent increase in shelter. The energy index was up 13.0 percent while the food index inched up 0.2 percent. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bi-monthly changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U was up 7.3 percent, the largest over-the-year increase since January 1982. The rise was due mostly to a 6.0-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index, the largest since July of 1990. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) The energy index increased 27.8 percent over the year due mainly to gasoline prices advancing 45.6 percent over the year. Food prices jumped 7.2 percent, representing the highest 12-month rise since the series started in January 1999. (See [table 1](#).)

**Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, March 2019–March 2022**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

### Food

The food index advanced 0.2 percent over the last 2 months, the smallest increase of the last year. Prices for food at home increased 1.5 percent while those for food away from home decreased 1.5 percent – the first drop in a year. Within the food at home component, prices were higher for dairy and related products at 5.8 percent. Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials advanced 4.8 percent and meats, poultry, fish, and eggs increased 1.9 percent. The other food at home index (-0.4 percent) was the only major component to decline since January.

The 7.2 percent over-the-year food price increase reflected higher prices for both food at home (8.4 percent) and food away from home (5.6 percent). The food at home rise was the largest increase since August 2011; higher prices for meats, poultry, fish, and eggs, up 10.0 percent, and fruits and vegetables, up 8.6 percent, led the general rise in grocery prices.

### Energy

Since January, the energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, increased 13.0 percent, the highest increase since July 2008. The increase reflects sharply higher gasoline prices, up 23.3 percent, the largest 1-month change since 2007. The gasoline index was responsible for nearly a third of the overall CPI-U increase. Electricity prices, up 2.0 percent; utility (piped) gas service, up 4.3 percent; and an 18.3 percent increase in fuel oil also contributed to the energy rise.

Energy prices rose 27.8 percent since March 2021. This was the 14<sup>th</sup> consecutive over-the-year increase although it was below the peak of 30.8 percent in November. Higher gasoline prices, up 45.6 percent, accounted for most of the 12-month increase in the energy index but were below November’s peak of 52.3 percent. Over the year, electricity prices were up 7.3 percent, the same as in February. Utility (piped) gas service prices advanced 14.6 percent, breaking the trend of 8 months of price increases exceeding 20.0 percent. Fuel oil prices jumped 62.2 percent.

**All items less food and energy**

The index for all items less food and energy rose 1.5 percent since January. The advance was led by higher prices for medical care (4.5 percent), the highest increase since May 2020. Shelter contributed to the increase as well, up 1.0 percent, dominated by higher prices for lodging away from home, up 21.6 percent. New and used motor vehicles increased 3.7 percent due to new vehicle prices increasing 1.0 percent although prices for used cars and trucks were down 0.8 percent. While prices were generally higher, the education and communication index and other goods and services index each declined, down 0.1 and 1.6 percent, respectively.

Since March 2021, the index for all items less food and energy rose 6.0 percent over the year, the largest increase since July 1990. New and used motor vehicles prices hit a series high (25.9 percent), due mostly to a series of large increases for used cars and trucks which pushed that index up 37.0 percent. Shelter prices increased 2.8 percent, due mostly to owners’ equivalent rent of residences advancing 2.4 percent.

**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	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month
January.....	0.9	2.2	0.5	0.8	0.5	1.6	0.7	1.5	0.9	6.0
March .....	-0.1	1.8	0.7	1.6	-0.4	0.4	0.7	2.6	1.9	7.3
May.....	0.7	2.5	0.6	1.6	0.1	-0.1	1.3	3.8		
July.....	0.1	2.5	-0.3	1.2	0.6	0.8	1.2	4.4		
September.....	0.4	2.0	0.1	0.9	0.6	1.2	0.7	4.5		
November.....	-0.7	1.3	-0.2	1.5	0.0	1.4	1.2	5.8		

**The May 2022 Consumer Price Index for the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria area is scheduled to be released on June 10, 2022.**

**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	Jan. 2022	Feb. 2022	Mar. 2022	Mar. 2021	Jan. 2022	Feb. 2022
All items.....		286.678		292.227	7.3	1.9	
Food and beverages .....		282.275		282.973	7.0	0.2	
Food .....		290.255		290.945	7.2	0.2	
Food at home .....		271.611	271.312	275.734	8.4	1.5	1.6
Cereals and bakery products .....		359.876		362.487	11.0	0.7	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		303.997		309.689	10.0	1.9	
Dairy and related products .....		254.355		269.076	8.6	5.8	
Fruits and vegetables .....		283.943		285.994	8.6	0.7	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1) .....		230.734		241.745	8.4	4.8	
Other food at home .....		225.278		224.295	5.5	-0.4	
Food away from home.....		314.454		309.828	5.6	-1.5	
Alcoholic beverages .....		208.484		209.290	5.2	0.4	
Housing .....		295.623		299.173	4.4	1.2	
Shelter .....		351.198	352.173	354.604	2.8	1.0	0.7
Rent of primary residence .....		380.423	380.826	381.529	0.9	0.3	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....		360.425	361.222	361.884	2.4	0.4	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2) .....		360.425	361.222	361.884	2.4	0.4	0.2
Fuels and utilities.....		252.309		258.005	7.6	2.3	
Household energy .....		197.741	200.446	203.599	10.5	3.0	1.6
Energy services.....		201.239	203.992	206.688	9.4	2.7	1.3
Electricity .....		213.040	216.866	217.366	7.3	2.0	0.2
Utility (piped) gas service .....		166.116	166.673	173.331	14.6	4.3	4.0
Household furnishings and operations.....		125.456		127.765	11.7	1.8	
Apparel .....		157.368		160.063	8.1	1.7	
Transportation .....		243.693		259.648	20.1	6.5	
Private transportation .....		255.595		270.658	21.9	5.9	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....		118.604		123.039	25.9	3.7	
New vehicles(1).....		217.455		219.582	13.4	1.0	
Used cars and trucks(1) .....		454.443		450.712	37.0	-0.8	
Motor fuel .....		312.219	327.520	385.173	45.7	23.4	17.6
Gasoline (all types).....		308.777	323.782	380.597	45.6	23.3	17.5
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		302.229	317.433	374.011	46.5	23.8	17.8
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		314.128	325.916	378.075	41.3	20.4	16.0
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		324.478	335.994	387.758	39.4	19.5	15.4
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....							
Medical care .....		504.305		526.961	5.7	4.5	
Recreation(3).....		121.605		121.941	3.5	0.3	
Education and communication(3).....		161.400		161.195	2.9	-0.1	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1).....		1,505.849		1,505.055	4.4	-0.1	
Other goods and services .....		473.848		466.406	5.5	-1.6	
<b>Commodity and service group</b>							
Commodities .....		204.875		209.927	13.1	2.5	

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	Jan. 2022	Feb. 2022	Mar. 2022	Mar. 2021	Jan. 2022	Feb. 2022
Commodities less food and beverages .....		165.596		171.904	17.6	3.8	
Nondurables less food and beverages...		211.817		226.459	17.0	6.9	
Durables .....		120.516		121.653	19.0	0.9	
Services .....		359.010		364.831	3.9	1.6	
<b>Special aggregate indexes</b>							
All items less shelter .....		260.065		266.431	9.6	2.4	
All items less medical care .....		276.410		281.120	7.4	1.7	
Commodities less food .....		167.475		173.644	16.9	3.7	
Nondurables .....		246.151		254.015	11.3	3.2	
Nondurables less food .....		210.977		224.549	15.9	6.4	
Services less rent of shelter(2) .....		379.550		388.384	5.1	2.3	
Services less medical care services .....		344.237		348.657	3.8	1.3	
Energy .....		252.248	260.086	285.059	27.8	13.0	9.6
All items less energy .....		293.252		297.062	6.2	1.3	
All items less food and energy .....		294.946		299.284	6.0	1.5	

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.