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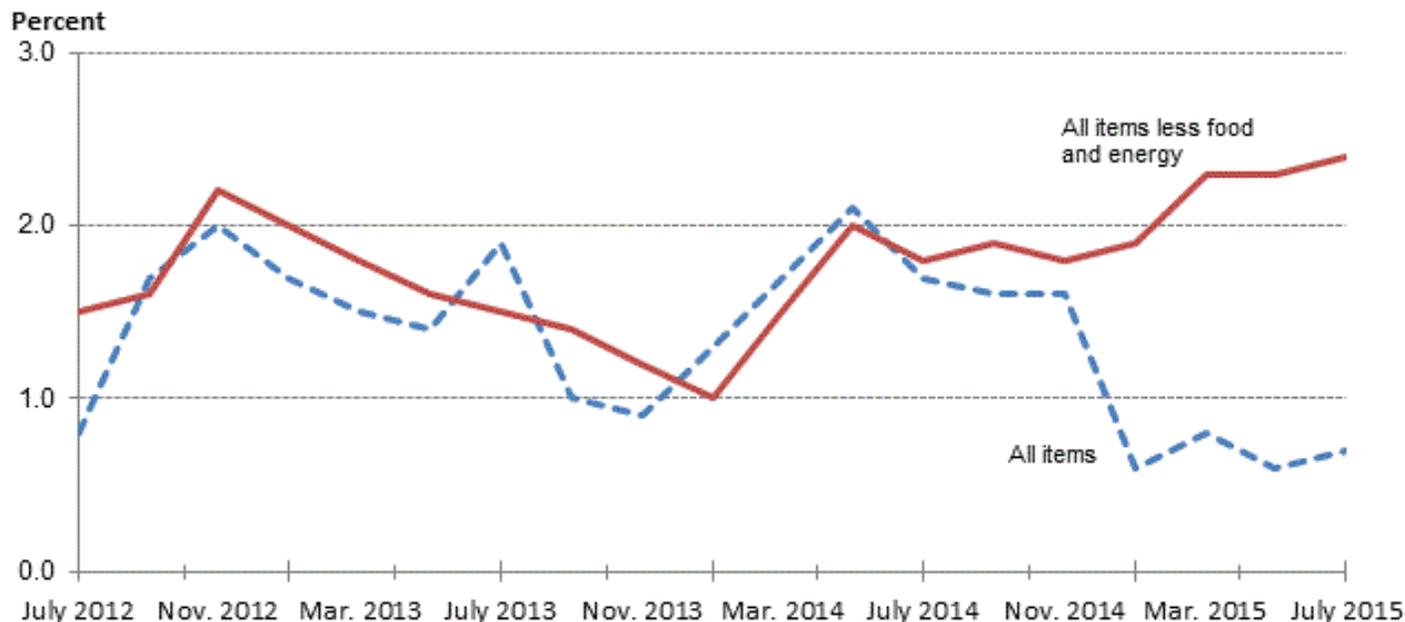
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**Consumer Price Index, Boston-Brockton-Nashua — July 2015**  
**Area prices edged up 0.1 percent over two months; up 0.7 percent from a year ago**

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Boston-Brockton-Nashua area edged up 0.1 percent in July, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Deborah A. Brown noted that the two-month increase was mainly due to higher prices for shelter, up 1.0 percent over two months, and to a lesser extent, food prices up 0.6 percent. Lower prices paid by area consumers for energy, down 2.2 percent, and apparel, down 4.6 percent, largely offset this increase. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bimonthly changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months the Boston CPI-U rose 0.7 percent. The increase was largely attributable to higher shelter and food prices, up 4.1 and 2.4 percent, respectively. (See [chart 1.](#)) Lower energy prices paid by area consumers, down 18.3 percent, nearly offset the modest increase.

**Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Boston-Brockton-Nashua, July 2012 - July 2015**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## **Food**

Food prices were up 0.6 percent since May. A rise in the prices for food away from home (1.3 percent), or restaurant prices, were the main cause of this rise. Grocery store prices, also known as food at home, edged up 0.3 percent and contributed to the increase, albeit to a lesser extent.

From July 2014 to July 2015 the index for food rose 2.4 percent due to higher grocery store prices (+2.2 percent) and higher restaurant prices (+2.7 percent).

## **Energy**

The energy index was down 2.2 percent over the two months, mainly due to decreases in the prices paid for electricity (-9.2 percent). This decrease was partially offset by higher prices for gasoline, up 2.5 percent from May. Area motorists paid \$2.753 per gallon of gasoline in July.

Energy prices were down 18.3 percent from a year ago, attributable to lower gasoline prices, down 25.6 percent. Contributing to the decline were lower prices paid by area consumers for utility (piped) gas, down 23.8 percent from one year ago. Partially offsetting these declines was a 5.6-percent advance in local electricity prices.

## **All items less food and energy**

The index for all items less food and energy edged up 0.2 percent from May. Increases in the indexes for shelter (+1.0 percent) and medical care (+0.8 percent) led the advance but were offset by decreases in the indexes for apparel (-4.6 percent) and public transportation (-7.9 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy rose 2.4 percent, with higher shelter costs, rising 4.1 percent from July 2014, being the main cause of this increase. This marked the 49<sup>th</sup> consecutive annual increase in the local shelter index.

## **CPI-W**

In July, the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) was 256.251. The CPI-W was unchanged over two months and edged up 0.3 percent over the year.

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**The September 2015 Consumer Price Index for Boston-Brockton-Nashua is scheduled to be released on Thursday, October 15, 2015, at 8:30 a.m. (ET).**

## **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 89 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 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 6,000 housing units and approximately 24,000 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 change 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/homch17\\_a.htm](http://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch17_a.htm).

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 Boston-Brockton-Nashua, Mass.-N.H.-Maine-Conn. consolidated area covered in this release is comprised of Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth and Suffolk Counties and parts of Bristol, Hampden, and Worcester Counties in Massachusetts; parts of Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, and Strafford Counties in New Hampshire; part of York County in Maine; and part of Windham County in Connecticut.

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**Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Boston-Brockton-Nashua, Ma.-N.H.-Maine-Conn., (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)**

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	May 2015	Jun. 2015	Jul. 2015	Jul. 2014	May 2015	Jun. 2015
All items .....		256.839		256.999	0.7	0.1	
All items (1967 = 100) .....		746.509		746.974			
Food and beverages .....		254.437		255.875	2.3	0.6	
Food .....		254.940		256.546	2.4	0.6	
Food at home .....		245.976	247.301	246.598	2.2	0.3	-0.3
Food away from home .....		269.653		273.106	2.7	1.3	
Alcoholic beverages .....		252.662		252.377	1.5	-0.1	
Housing .....		255.605		255.879	2.3	0.1	
Shelter .....		302.001	303.108	304.993	4.1	1.0	0.6
Rent of primary residence (1) .....		311.139	311.924	313.534	3.7	0.8	0.5
Owners' equivalent rent of residences (1) (2) (3) .....		321.843	322.887	323.968	4.2	0.7	0.3
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence (1) (2) (3) .....		321.843	322.887	323.968	4.2	0.7	0.3
Fuels and utilities .....		241.306		228.751	-8.2	-5.2	
Household energy .....		202.045	203.117	189.276	-9.9	-6.3	-6.8
Energy services (1) .....		203.852	205.299	188.961	-3.3	-7.3	-8.0
Electricity (1) .....		242.717	244.932	220.402	5.6	-9.2	-10.0
Utility (piped) gas service (1) .....		127.153	127.157	126.231	-23.8	-0.7	-0.7
Household furnishings and operations .....		129.335		127.470	-0.3	-1.4	
Apparel .....		152.581		145.541	4.2	-4.6	
Transportation .....		192.761		192.227	-9.4	-0.3	
Private transportation .....		190.081		191.357	-9.2	0.7	
Motor fuel .....		227.776	233.878	233.464	-25.6	2.5	-0.2
Gasoline (all types) .....		225.082	231.127	230.736	-25.6	2.5	-0.2
Gasoline, unleaded regular (4) .....		221.794	228.094	227.134	-26.3	2.4	-0.4
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade (4) (5) .....		232.594	237.606	238.273	-24.4	2.4	0.3
Gasoline, unleaded premium (4) .....		225.290	230.653	232.459	-22.6	3.2	0.8
Medical care .....		599.276		604.047	2.5	0.8	
Recreation (6) .....		117.594		118.063	2.9	0.4	
Education and communication (6) .....		150.823		151.166	1.9	0.2	
Other goods and services .....		445.594		447.172	1.5	0.4	
<b>Commodity and service group</b>							
Commodities .....		191.587		191.314	-2.7	-0.1	
Commodities less food and beverages .....		158.371		157.254	-6.3	-0.7	
Nondurables less food and beverages .....		205.757		205.215	-8.7	-0.3	
Durables .....		112.068		110.440	-2.0	-1.5	
Services .....		315.409		315.986	2.7	0.2	
<b>Special aggregate indexes</b>							
All items less shelter .....		241.728		240.764	-1.0	-0.4	
All items less medical care .....		243.492		243.506	0.5	0.0	
Commodities less food .....		162.109		161.028	-5.9	-0.7	
Nondurables .....		228.948		229.405	-2.8	0.2	

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

**Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Boston-Brockton-Nashua, Ma.-N.H.-Maine-Conn., (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued**

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	May 2015	Jun. 2015	Jul. 2015	Jul. 2014	May 2015	Jun. 2015
Nondurables less food.....		207.920		207.404	-7.8	-0.2	
Services less rent of shelter <sup>(2)</sup> .....		347.274		344.764	1.2	-0.7	
Services less medical care services.....		295.920		296.396	2.8	0.2	
Energy .....		211.791	215.043	207.142	-18.3	-2.2	-3.7
All items less energy .....		264.837		265.458	2.4	0.2	
All items less food and energy .....		267.318		267.740	2.4	0.2	

Footnotes

- (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.