

For Release: Thursday, January 22, 2015

15-117-SAN

WESTERN INFORMATION OFFICE: San Francisco, Calif.

Technical information: (415) 625-2270 • BLSinfoSF@bls.gov • www.bls.gov/regions/west/

Media contact: (415) 625-2270

## Average Energy Prices, Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton, December 2014

Gasoline prices averaged \$2.884 a gallon in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton area in December 2014, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Richard J. Holden noted that area gasoline prices were down 45.8 cents compared to last December when they averaged \$3.342 per gallon. Seattle area households paid an average of 8.3 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) of electricity in December 2014, down from 9.4 cents paid in December 2013. The average cost of utility (piped) gas at \$1.214 per therm in December was similar to the \$1.195 per therm spent last year. (Data in this release are not seasonally adjusted; accordingly, over-the-year-analysis is used throughout.)

At \$2.884 a gallon, Seattle area consumers paid 10.2 percent more than the \$2.618 national average in December 2014. A year earlier, consumers in the Seattle area paid close to the national average for a gallon of gasoline. The local price of a gallon of gasoline has been within 10.2 percent of the national average in the month of December in each of the past five years. (See [chart 1](#).)

The 8.3 cents per kWh Seattle households paid for electricity in December 2014 was 38.5 percent less than the nationwide average of 13.5 cents per kWh. Last December, electricity costs were 28.2 percent lower in Seattle compared to the nation. In each of the past five years, prices paid by Seattle area consumers for electricity were less than the U.S. average by at least 27.6 percent in the month of December. (See [chart 2](#).)

Prices paid by Seattle area consumers for utility (piped) gas, commonly referred to as natural gas, were \$1.214 per therm, or 14.5 percent more compared to the national average in December 2014 (\$1.060 per therm). A year earlier, area consumers paid 19.7 percent more price per therm for natural gas compared to the nation. In the past five years, the per therm cost for natural gas in December in the Seattle area has varied between 14.5 percent and 21.2 percent above the U.S. average. (See [chart 3](#).)

The Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton, Wash. metropolitan area consists of Kitsap, Thurston, Island, King, Snohomish, and Pierce Counties of Washington.

## Technical Note

Average prices are estimated from Consumer Price Index (CPI) data for selected commodity series to support the research and analytic needs of CPI data users. Average prices for electricity, utility (piped) gas, and gasoline are published monthly for the U.S. city average, the 4 regions, the 3 population size classes, 10 region/size-class cross-classifications, and the 14 largest local index areas. For electricity, average prices per kilowatt-hour (kWh) and per 500 kWh are published. For utility (piped) gas, average prices per therm, per 40 therms, and per 100 therms are published. For gasoline, the average price per gallon is published. Average prices for commonly available grades of gasoline are published as well as the average price across all grades.

Price quotes for 40 therms and 100 therms of utility (piped) gas and for 500 kWh of electricity are collected in sample outlets for use in the average price programs only. Since they are for specified consumption amounts, they are not used in the CPI. All other price quotes used for average price estimation are regular CPI data.

With the exception of the 40 therms, 100 therms, and 500 kWh price quotes, all eligible prices are converted to a price per normalized quantity. These prices are then used to estimate a price for a defined fixed quantity.

The average price per kilowatt-hour represents the total bill divided by the kilowatt-hour usage. The total bill is the sum of all items applicable to all consumers appearing on an electricity bill including, but not limited to, variable rates per kWh, fixed costs, taxes, surcharges, and credits. This calculation also applies to the average price per therm for utility (piped) gas.

Information from this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200, Federal Relay Service: 800-877-8339.

**Table 1. Average prices for gasoline, electricity, and utility (piped) gas, Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton and the United States, December 2013-December 2014, not seasonally adjusted**

Year and month	Gasoline per gallon		Electricity per kWh		Utility (piped) gas per therm	
	Seattle area	United States	Seattle area	United States	Seattle area	United States
<b>2013</b>						
December.....	3.342	3.333	0.094	0.131	1.195	0.998
<b>2014</b>						
January.....	3.416	3.378	0.096	0.134	1.195	1.040
February.....	3.366	3.422	0.096	0.134	1.195	1.078
March.....	3.624	3.590	0.096	0.135	1.195	1.154
April.....	3.795	3.717	0.098	0.131	1.195	1.137
May.....	3.920	3.745	0.099	0.136	1.187	1.111
June.....	3.977	3.750	0.096	0.143	1.187	1.088
July.....	4.007	3.690	0.096	0.143	1.187	1.093
August.....	3.881	3.540	0.096	0.143	1.187	1.060
September.....	3.794	3.463	0.096	0.141	1.187	1.058
October.....	3.448	3.241	0.095	0.136	1.186	1.033
November.....	3.048	2.945	0.095	0.134	1.214	1.035
December.....	2.884	2.618	0.083	0.135	1.214	1.060