NEWS RELEASE
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

For Release: Friday, May 22, 2015 **15-1009-SAN**

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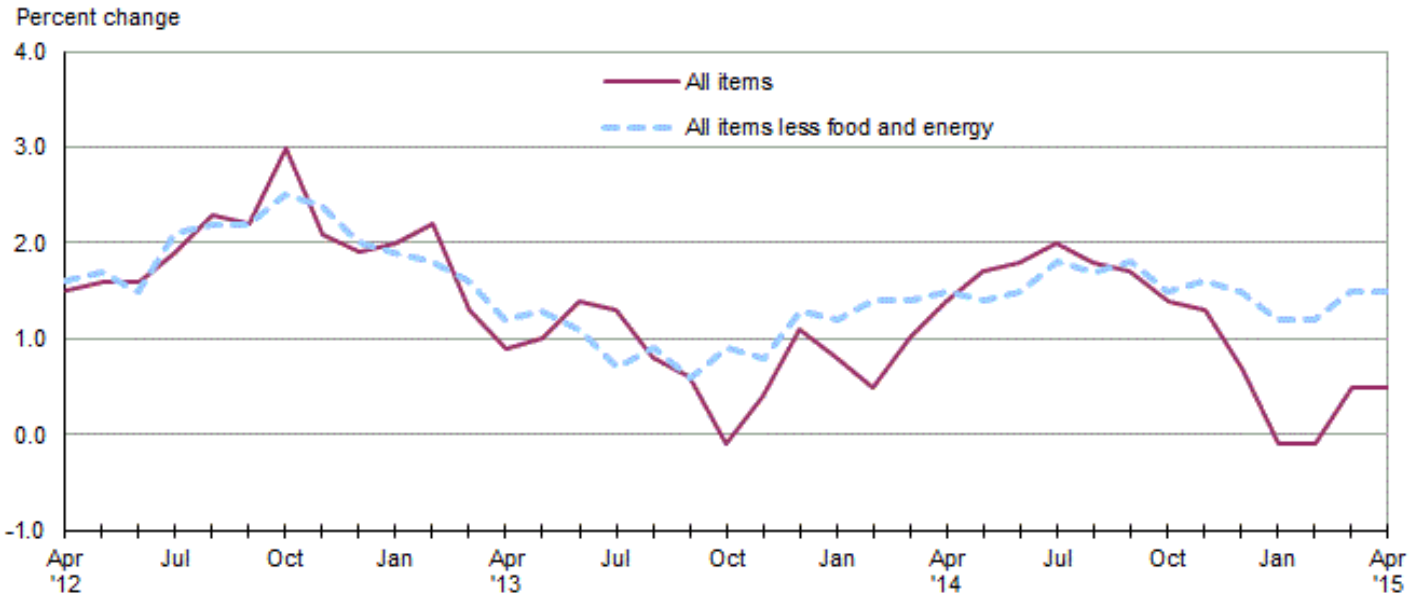
Consumer Price Index, Los Angeles area — April 2015

Area prices were down 0.1 percent over the past month, up 0.5 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Los Angeles area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), inched down 0.1 percent in April, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See table A.) Regional Commissioner Richard J. Holden noted that the April decrease was influenced by lower prices for gasoline and apparel. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U increased 0.5 percent. (See chart 1 and table A.) Energy prices dropped 13.1 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. The index for all items less food and energy increased 1.5 percent over the year. (See table 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Los Angeles, April 2012–April 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices advanced 0.3 percent for the month of April. (See table 1.) Prices for food at home advanced 0.4 percent, and during the same period prices for food away from home were virtually unchanged (0.1 percent).

Over the year, food prices increased 2.5 percent. Prices for food away from home advanced 3.0 percent since a year ago, and prices for food at home rose 2.1 percent.

Energy

The energy index declined 2.4 percent over the month. The decrease was mainly due to lower prices for gasoline (-3.6 percent). Prices for natural gas service decreased 3.1 percent, but prices for electricity rose 0.8 percent in the same period.

Energy prices dropped 13.1 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-24.1 percent). Prices paid for natural gas service decreased 7.2 percent, but prices for electricity jumped 21.9 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy inched up 0.1 percent in April. Higher prices for education and communication (0.7 percent), medical care (0.3 percent), and shelter (0.1 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for apparel (-2.3 percent) and household furnishings and operations (-1.1 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy increased 1.5 percent. Components contributing to the increase included shelter (3.5 percent) and medical care (3.1 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were price declines in apparel (-7.7 percent) and recreation (-2.8 percent).

Table A. Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County CPI-U monthly and annual percent changes (not seasonally adjusted)

Month	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual
January	0.4	1.8	0.9	1.8	0.8	2.1	0.8	2.0	0.5	0.8	-0.3	-0.1
February	0.0	1.4	0.5	2.3	0.5	2.1	0.7	2.2	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.1
March	0.4	1.9	1.1	3.0	1.0	2.0	0.1	1.3	0.6	1.0	1.0	0.5
April	0.2	1.9	0.5	3.3	0.0	1.5	-0.4	0.9	0.0	1.4	-0.1	0.5
May	0.2	1.8	0.0	3.1	0.1	1.6	0.1	1.0	0.4	1.7		
June	-0.2	0.9	-0.4	2.9	-0.4	1.6	-0.1	1.4	0.1	1.8		
July	0.1	0.9	-0.4	2.4	-0.1	1.9	-0.1	1.3	0.1	2.0		
August	0.2	0.8	0.2	2.4	0.6	2.3	0.1	0.8	-0.1	1.8		
September	-0.1	0.4	0.5	3.1	0.4	2.2	0.2	0.6	0.0	1.7		
October	0.3	0.7	0.0	2.8	0.8	3.0	0.1	-0.1	-0.1	1.4		
November	-0.4	0.7	-0.1	3.0	-1.0	2.1	-0.5	0.4	-0.7	1.3		
December	0.3	1.3	-0.5	2.2	-0.7	1.9	0.0	1.1	-0.5	0.7		

The May 2015 Consumer Price Index for the Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County is scheduled to be released on June 18, 2015.

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 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 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.

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 Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA. metropolitan area covered in this release is comprised of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties in the State of California.

Information in 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. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015	Apr. 2015	Apr. 2014	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015
Expenditure category						
All items	241.297	243.738	243.569	0.5	0.9	-0.1
All items (1967=100)	712.900	720.111	719.611	-	-	-
Food and beverages	248.892	248.363	249.003	2.5	0.0	0.3
Food	249.082	248.534	249.248	2.5	0.1	0.3
Food at home	259.032	257.960	258.979	2.1	0.0	0.4
Food away from home	232.938	233.064	233.381	3.0	0.2	0.1
Alcoholic beverages	231.635	231.359	231.071	2.7	-0.2	-0.1
Housing	264.550	265.421	265.396	3.6	0.3	0.0
Shelter	298.537	299.897	300.314	3.5	0.6	0.1
Rent of primary residence [1]	312.124	313.508	313.992	3.9	0.6	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of residences [1] [2]	310.325	311.722	312.205	3.3	0.6	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence [1] [2]	310.319	311.712	312.195	3.3	0.6	0.2
Fuels and utilities	296.282	295.360	294.684	10.0	-0.5	-0.2
Household energy	262.995	261.682	260.958	12.2	-0.8	-0.3
Energy services [1]	261.782	260.382	259.737	12.6	-0.8	-0.2
Electricity [1]	305.940	304.112	306.635	21.9	0.2	0.8
Utility (piped) gas service [1]	206.883	206.125	199.661	-7.2	-3.5	-3.1
Household furnishings and operations	117.341	117.203	115.963	-1.4	-1.2	-1.1
Apparel	109.115	110.898	108.358	-7.7	-0.7	-2.3
Transportation	191.014	201.691	200.506	-8.4	5.0	-0.6
Private transportation	185.603	196.427	194.605	-8.5	4.9	-0.9
Motor fuel	219.228	258.782	249.347	-24.1	13.7	-3.6
Gasoline (all types)	214.426	253.274	244.038	-24.1	13.8	-3.6
Gasoline, unleaded regular [3]	215.041	254.262	245.001	-24.3	13.9	-3.6
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade [3] [4]	203.866	241.234	232.593	-23.2	14.1	-3.6
Gasoline, unleaded premium [3]	204.587	239.499	231.098	-23.2	13.0	-3.5
Medical care	418.580	421.601	422.773	3.1	1.0	0.3
Recreation [5]	102.833	102.860	102.830	-2.8	0.0	0.0
Education and communication [5]	145.243	145.710	146.701	0.8	1.0	0.7
Other goods and services	382.310	381.647	381.737	0.5	-0.1	0.0
Commodity and service group						
All items	241.297	243.738	243.569	0.5	0.9	-0.1
Commodities	174.376	177.798	176.703	-3.5	1.3	-0.6
Commodities less food & beverages	135.194	140.160	138.369	-7.7	2.3	-1.3
Nondurables less food & beverages	173.694	183.253	179.607	-11.0	3.4	-2.0
Durables	97.456	98.057	98.026	-1.4	0.6	0.0
Services	300.456	301.870	302.614	2.9	0.7	0.2
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	233.401	235.802	235.590	0.3	0.9	-0.1
All items less shelter	216.374	219.281	218.858	-1.3	1.1	-0.2
Commodities less food	139.383	144.221	142.464	-7.2	2.2	-1.2
Nondurables	212.127	217.046	215.378	-4.0	1.5	-0.8
Nondurables less food	179.152	188.180	184.711	-10.0	3.1	-1.8
Services less rent of shelter [2]	311.748	313.264	314.505	2.1	0.9	0.4
Services less medical care services	290.106	291.310	292.017	3.0	0.7	0.2
Energy	236.829	260.937	254.791	-13.1	7.6	-2.4
All items less energy	243.487	244.373	244.636	1.7	0.5	0.1

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 Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015	Apr. 2015	Apr. 2014	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015
All items less food and energy	242.806	243.957	244.138	1.5	0.5	0.1

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) Index is on a December 1982=100 base.
(3) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
(4) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.
(5) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.
- Data not available
NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.