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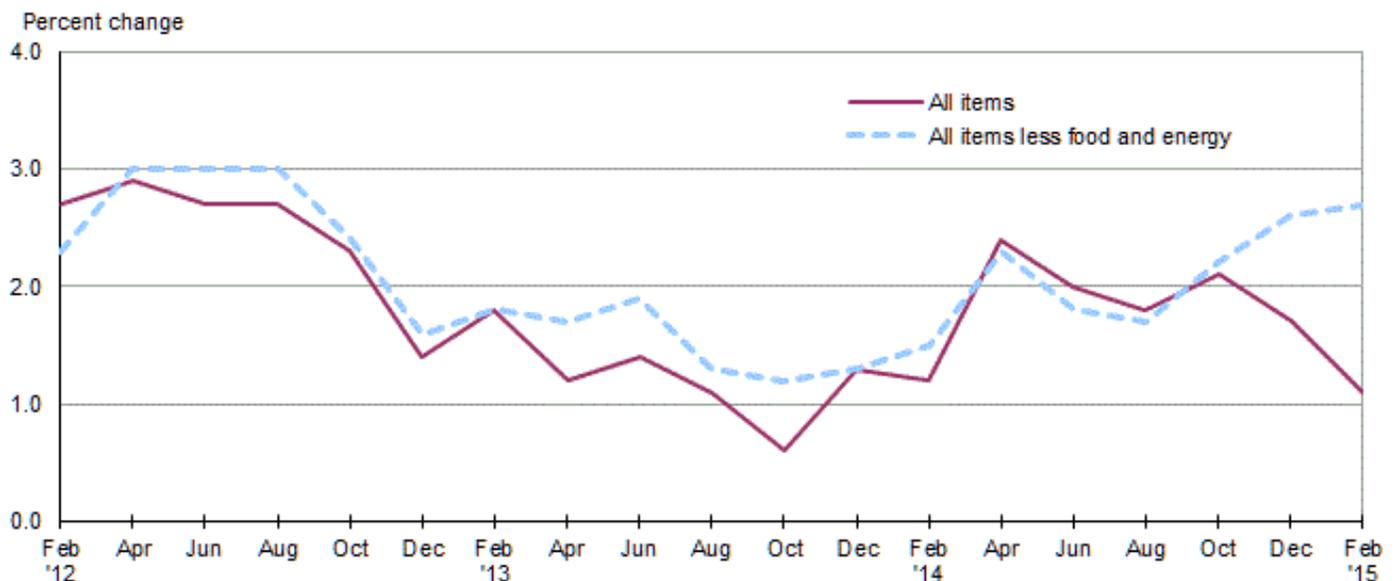
Consumer Price Index, Seattle area – February 2015

Area prices were up 0.2 percent over the past two months, up 1.1 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Seattle Area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), increased 0.2 percent for the two months ending in February 2015, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See [table A.](#)) Regional Commissioner Richard J. Holden noted that the February increase was influenced by higher prices for electricity, shelter, 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 advanced 1.1 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A.](#)) Energy prices fell 19.1 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. The index for all items less food and energy advanced 2.7 percent over the year. (See [table 1.](#))

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Seattle, February 2012–February 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices inched down 0.1 percent for the two months ending in February. (See [table 1.](#)) Prices for food at home declined 0.3 percent, while prices for food away from home were unchanged for the same period.

Over the year, food prices advanced 2.7 percent. Prices for food at home increased 3.2 percent since a year ago, and prices for food away from home rose 2.0 percent.

Energy

The energy index decreased 6.5 percent for the two months ending in February. The decrease was mainly due to lower prices for gasoline (-18.3 percent). Prices for electricity jumped 15.4 percent, and prices for natural gas service inched up 0.1 percent for the same period.

Energy prices fell 19.1 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-30.1 percent). Prices paid for natural gas service advanced 1.7 percent, but prices for electricity inched down 0.1 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy advanced 0.8 percent in the latest two-month period. Higher prices for apparel (4.8 percent) and shelter (0.5 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for other goods and services (-0.6 percent) and household furnishings and operations (-0.2 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 2.7 percent. Components contributing to the increase included household furnishings and operations (5.6 percent) and shelter (4.7 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were lower prices for other goods and services (-0.6 percent).

Table A. Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton CPI-U bi-monthly and annual percent changes (not seasonally adjusted)

Month	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	Bi-monthly	Annual										
February.....	0.2	0.6	1.2	1.5	0.4	2.7	0.8	1.8	0.7	1.2	0.2	1.1
April.....	0.2	0.3	0.8	2.1	0.9	2.9	0.4	1.2	1.6	2.4		
June.....	-0.2	-0.5	0.8	3.2	0.7	2.7	0.8	1.4	0.4	2.0		
August.....	0.7	0.2	0.2	2.7	0.3	2.7	0.0	1.1	-0.2	1.8		
October.....	-0.2	0.4	0.9	3.8	0.5	2.3	0.0	0.6	0.3	2.1		
December.....	-0.2	0.6	-0.5	3.5	-1.4	1.4	-0.7	1.3	-1.1	1.7		

The April 2015 Consumer Price Index for the Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton is scheduled to be released on May 22, 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 Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton, WA. metropolitan area covered in this release is comprised of Island, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, and Thurston Counties in the State of Washington.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton, WA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Dec. 2014	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015	Feb. 2014	Dec. 2014	Jan. 2015
Expenditure category						
All items.....	245.050	-	245.496	1.1	0.2	-
All items (1967=100).....	747.006	-	748.368	-	-	-
Food and beverages.....	256.888	-	256.357	2.4	-0.2	-
Food.....	260.002	-	259.637	2.7	-0.1	-
Food at home.....	250.476	252.331	249.803	3.2	-0.3	-1.0
Food away from home.....	275.267	-	275.368	2.0	0.0	-
Alcoholic beverages.....	220.470	-	218.335	-0.8	-1.0	-
Housing.....	265.492	-	268.372	4.3	1.1	-
Shelter.....	297.672	297.918	299.053	4.7	0.5	0.4
Rent of primary residence ⁽¹⁾	302.513	303.499	305.025	6.1	0.8	0.5
Owners' equiv. rent of residences ^{(1) (2)}	312.048	313.082	314.425	4.3	0.8	0.4
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence ^{(1) (2)}	312.048	313.082	314.425	4.3	0.8	0.4
Fuels and utilities.....	227.770	-	246.330	-0.2	8.1	-
Household energy.....	201.426	224.028	223.782	-2.2	11.1	-0.1
Energy services ⁽¹⁾	235.581	264.772	264.772	0.2	12.4	0.0
Electricity ⁽¹⁾	239.922	276.911	276.911	-0.1	15.4	0.0
Utility (piped) gas service ⁽¹⁾	185.675	185.940	185.940	1.7	0.1	0.0
Household furnishings and operations.....	178.728	-	178.295	5.6	-0.2	-
Apparel.....	120.679	-	126.499	0.6	4.8	-
Transportation.....	211.835	-	202.264	-9.4	-4.5	-
Private transportation.....	219.653	-	208.966	-10.1	-4.9	-
Motor fuel.....	309.086	251.591	252.668	-30.0	-18.3	0.4
Gasoline (all types).....	314.530	255.756	257.014	-30.1	-18.3	0.5
Gasoline, unleaded regular ⁽³⁾	344.465	278.906	280.302	-30.5	-18.6	0.5
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade ^{(3) (4)}	244.783	200.815	201.647	-29.2	-17.6	0.4
Gasoline, unleaded premium ⁽³⁾	278.317	229.329	230.544	-28.7	-17.2	0.5
Medical care.....	383.781	-	387.310	0.6	0.9	-
Recreation ⁽⁵⁾	96.168	-	97.369	3.5	1.2	-
Education and communication ⁽⁵⁾	137.582	-	139.574	1.0	1.4	-
Other goods and services.....	397.107	-	394.816	-0.6	-0.6	-
Commodity and service group						
All items.....	245.050	-	245.496	1.1	0.2	-
Commodities.....	189.795	-	186.859	-3.2	-1.5	-
Commodities less food & beverages.....	156.464	-	152.520	-6.9	-2.5	-
Nondurables less food & beverages.....	184.208	-	176.201	-10.9	-4.3	-
Durables.....	127.952	-	128.028	-1.0	0.1	-
Services.....	296.774	-	300.226	3.7	1.2	-
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care.....	238.764	-	239.065	1.2	0.1	-
All items less shelter.....	225.368	-	225.426	-0.8	0.0	-
Commodities less food.....	159.202	-	155.324	-6.6	-2.4	-

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 Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton, WA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Dec. 2014	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015	Feb. 2014	Dec. 2014	Jan. 2015
Nondurables.....	219.095	-	214.595	-3.8	-2.1	-
Nondurables less food.....	187.360	-	179.787	-10.0	-4.0	-
Services less rent of shelter ⁽²⁾	303.136	-	309.292	2.4	2.0	-
Services less medical care services.....	287.833	-	291.276	3.9	1.2	-
Energy.....	261.401	243.879	244.299	-19.1	-6.5	0.2
All items less energy.....	246.720	-	248.276	2.7	0.6	-
All items less food and energy.....	244.719	-	246.594	2.7	0.8	-

⁽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 November 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.