



**For Release: Tuesday, May 17, 2016**

**16-1003-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

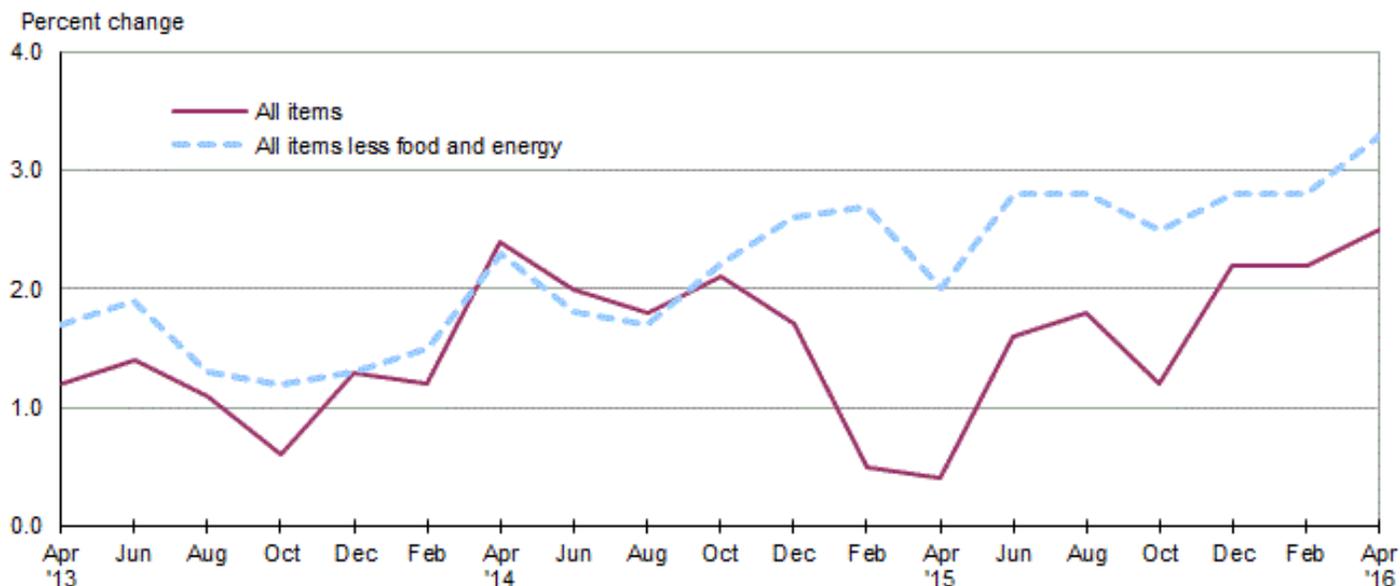
## **Consumer Price Index, Seattle area — April 2016**

**Area prices were up 1.1 percent over the past two months, up 2.5 percent from a year ago**

Prices in the Seattle Area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), rose 1.1 percent for the two months ending in April 2016, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See [table A.](#)) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the April increase was influenced by higher prices for shelter and gasoline. (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 2.5 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A.](#)) Energy prices declined 6.0 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. The index for all items less food and energy advanced 3.3 percent over the year. (See [table 1.](#))

**Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Seattle, April 2013–April 2016**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

### **Food**

Food prices rose 0.8 percent for the two months ending in April. (See [table 1.](#)) Prices for food away from home advanced 1.4 percent, and prices for food at home rose 0.3 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices rose 1.8 percent. Prices for food away from home moved up 3.8 percent since a year ago, and prices for food at home rose 0.3 percent.

## Energy

The energy index rose 6.1 percent for the two months ending in April. The increase was mainly due to higher prices for gasoline (11.7 percent). Prices for electricity rose 2.4 percent, and prices for natural gas service moved up 0.2 percent for the same period.

Energy prices declined 6.0 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-13.2 percent). Prices paid for natural gas service dropped 13.0 percent, but prices for electricity advanced 7.3 percent during the past year.

## All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.9 percent in the latest two-month period. Higher prices for apparel (5.4 percent), shelter (1.1 percent), and recreation (1.1 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for medical care (-0.9 percent) and household furnishings and operations (-0.7 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 3.3 percent. Components contributing to the increase included shelter (5.8 percent) and apparel (1.7 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were price declines in other goods and services (-1.1 percent) and household furnishings and operations (-0.9 percent).

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

Month	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
	Bi-monthly	Annual										
February .....	1.2	1.5	0.4	2.7	0.8	1.8	0.7	1.2	0.2	1.1	0.2	2.2
April .....	0.8	2.1	0.9	2.9	0.4	1.2	1.6	2.4	0.9	0.4	1.1	2.5
June .....	0.8	3.2	0.7	2.7	0.8	1.4	0.4	2.0	1.6	1.6		
August .....	0.2	2.7	0.3	2.7	0.0	1.1	-0.2	1.8	0.0	1.8		
October .....	0.9	3.8	0.5	2.3	0.0	0.6	0.3	2.1	-0.3	1.2		
December .....	-0.5	3.5	-1.4	1.4	-0.7	1.3	-1.1	1.7	-0.2	2.2		

**The June 2016 Consumer Price Index for the Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton is scheduled to be released on July 15, 2016.**

## 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](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 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.

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

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Feb. 2016	Mar. 2016	Apr. 2016	Apr. 2015	Feb. 2016	Mar. 2016
<b>Expenditure category</b>						
All items .....	250.942	-	253.815	2.5	1.1	-
All items (1967=100) .....	764.970	-	773.727	-	-	-
Food and beverages .....	258.926	-	260.868	1.9	0.8	-
Food .....	261.599	-	263.753	1.8	0.8	-
Food at home .....	247.632	245.818	248.481	0.3	0.3	1.1
Food away from home .....	283.488	-	287.560	3.8	1.4	-
Alcoholic beverages .....	226.936	-	226.685	3.3	-0.1	-
Housing .....	280.677	-	283.368	4.9	1.0	-
Shelter .....	315.890	318.556	319.450	5.8	1.1	0.3
Rent of primary residence <sup>(1)</sup> .....	321.916	323.460	323.890	6.2	0.6	0.1
Owners' equiv. rent of residences <sup>(1) (2)</sup> .....	332.575	334.620	335.421	6.2	0.9	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence <sup>(1) (2)</sup> .....	332.575	334.620	335.421	6.2	0.9	0.2
Fuels and utilities .....	253.974	-	257.202	3.1	1.3	-
Household energy .....	231.157	231.325	234.623	3.0	1.5	1.4
Energy services <sup>(1)</sup> .....	275.363	275.449	280.747	3.7	2.0	1.9
Electricity <sup>(1)</sup> .....	298.345	298.345	305.375	7.3	2.4	2.4
Utility (piped) gas service <sup>(1)</sup> .....	161.479	161.753	161.753	-13.0	0.2	0.0
Household furnishings and operations .....	173.551	-	172.377	-0.9	-0.7	-
Apparel .....	127.786	-	134.739	1.7	5.4	-
Transportation .....	201.733	-	207.900	-1.8	3.1	-
Private transportation .....	206.955	-	212.632	-2.5	2.7	-
Motor fuel .....	228.170	239.399	254.339	-13.4	11.5	6.2
Gasoline (all types) .....	232.686	244.398	259.919	-13.2	11.7	6.4
Gasoline, unleaded regular <sup>(3)</sup> .....	252.006	264.972	281.662	-14.1	11.8	6.3
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade <sup>(3) (4)</sup> .....	183.249	194.195	203.838	-12.5	11.2	5.0
Gasoline, unleaded premium <sup>(3)</sup> .....	216.537	225.657	241.280	-9.1	11.4	6.9
Medical care .....	393.678	-	390.089	1.1	-0.9	-
Recreation <sup>(5)</sup> .....	96.472	-	97.501	1.3	1.1	-
Education and communication <sup>(5)</sup> .....	140.701	-	140.259	1.7	-0.3	-
Other goods and services .....	389.731	-	392.218	-1.1	0.6	-
<b>Commodity and service group</b>						
All items .....	250.942	-	253.815	2.5	1.1	-
Commodities .....	184.552	-	186.955	-1.0	1.3	-
Commodities less food & beverages .....	148.140	-	150.674	-3.1	1.7	-
Nondurables less food & beverages .....	169.723	-	175.409	-4.6	3.4	-
Durables .....	125.343	-	125.055	-1.0	-0.2	-
Services .....	312.767	-	316.072	4.5	1.1	-
<b>Special aggregate indexes</b>						
All items less medical care .....	244.477	-	247.657	2.6	1.3	-
All items less shelter .....	226.230	-	228.842	0.7	1.2	-
Commodities less food .....	151.430	-	153.869	-2.8	1.6	-
Nondurables .....	212.378	-	216.307	-1.0	1.9	-
Nondurables less food .....	174.426	-	179.684	-3.9	3.0	-
Services less rent of shelter <sup>(2)</sup> .....	316.634	-	319.683	2.8	1.0	-
Services less medical care services .....	304.030	-	307.596	4.7	1.2	-
Energy .....	236.797	242.282	251.271	-6.0	6.1	3.7
All items less energy .....	254.565	-	256.761	3.1	0.9	-

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-		
	Feb. 2016	Mar. 2016	Apr. 2016	Apr. 2015	Feb. 2016	Mar. 2016
All items less food and energy .....	253.614	-	255.819	3.3	0.9	-

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 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.