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

For Release: Friday, April 14, 2017 **17-430-SAN**

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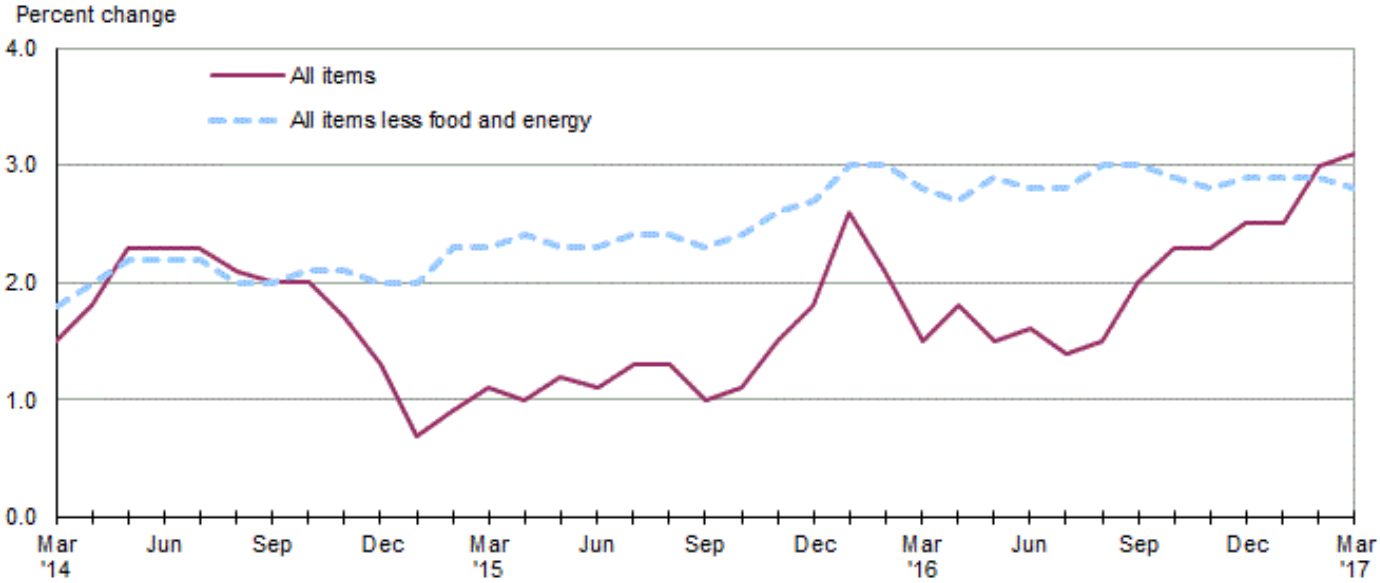
Consumer Price Index, West Region — March 2017

Area prices were up 0.3 percent over the past month, up 3.1 percent from a year ago

Prices in the West Region, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), increased 0.3 percent in March, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See table A.) The March increase was influenced by higher prices for gasoline and shelter. (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 3.1 percent. (See chart 1 and table A.) Energy prices jumped 11.5 percent, largely the result of an increase in the price of gasoline. The index for all items less food and energy rose 2.8 percent over the year. (See table 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, West region, March 2014–March 2017



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices increased 0.3 percent for the month of March. (See table 1.) Prices for food at home advanced 0.4 percent, and prices for food away from home inched up 0.2 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices increased 0.9 percent. Since a year ago, prices for food away from home rose 3.2 percent, but prices for food at home decreased 0.7 percent.

Energy

The energy index rose 1.8 percent over the month. The increase was mainly due to higher prices for gasoline (3.6 percent). Prices for electricity inched up 0.2 percent, but prices for natural gas service declined 0.9 percent in March.

Energy prices advanced 11.5 percent over the year, largely due to a jump in gasoline prices (20.2 percent). Prices paid for natural gas service increased 5.6 percent, and prices for electricity advanced 1.7 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy edged up 0.1 percent in March. Higher prices for apparel (0.7 percent) and shelter (0.3 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for education and communication (-1.2 percent) and household furnishings and operations (-0.2 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy rose 2.8 percent. Components contributing to the increase included shelter (5.2 percent) and medical care (2.4 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were price declines in education and communication (-2.2 percent) and household furnishings and operations (-0.9 percent).

Table A. West Region CPI-U monthly and annual percent changes (not seasonally adjusted)

Month	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual
January	0.4	2.6	0.3	1.7	0.3	1.7	-0.3	0.7	0.5	2.6	0.5	2.5
February	0.4	2.5	0.8	2.0	0.4	1.3	0.6	0.9	0.1	2.1	0.6	3.0
March	0.9	2.4	0.4	1.5	0.6	1.5	0.8	1.1	0.2	1.5	0.3	3.1
April	0.2	2.1	0.0	1.3	0.3	1.8	0.3	1.0	0.5	1.8		
May	0.2	2.0	0.2	1.3	0.6	2.3	0.8	1.2	0.5	1.5		
June	-0.2	2.0	0.1	1.5	0.1	2.3	0.0	1.1	0.2	1.6		
July	-0.3	1.8	0.0	1.9	0.1	2.3	0.3	1.3	0.1	1.4		
August	0.5	2.1	0.1	1.5	-0.1	2.1	-0.1	1.3	0.0	1.5		
September	0.5	2.2	0.2	1.3	0.1	2.0	-0.2	1.0	0.3	2.0		
October	0.4	2.5	-0.1	0.9	-0.1	2.0	0.0	1.1	0.3	2.3		
November	-0.7	1.9	-0.4	1.3	-0.6	1.7	-0.2	1.5	-0.2	2.3		
December	-0.5	1.7	0.0	1.8	-0.5	1.3	-0.1	1.8	0.0	2.5		

The April 2017 Consumer Price Index for the West Region is scheduled to be released May 12, 2017.

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 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 West Region covered in this release is comprised of the following thirteen states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

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

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jan. 2017	Feb. 2017	Mar. 2017	Mar. 2016	Jan. 2017	Feb. 2017
Expenditure category						
All Items	250.814	252.252	252.949	3.1	0.9	0.3
All items (December 1977=100)	405.426	407.752	408.878			
Food and beverages	252.503	253.665	254.373	1.0	0.7	0.3
Food	252.229	253.451	254.222	0.9	0.8	0.3
Food at home	244.028	245.268	246.208	-0.7	0.9	0.4
Food away from home	262.638	263.827	264.355	3.2	0.7	0.2
Alcoholic beverages	252.864	253.216	253.051	2.2	0.1	-0.1
Housing	271.486	272.828	273.355	4.5	0.7	0.2
Shelter	310.723	312.523	313.379	5.2	0.9	0.3
Rent of primary residence(1)	327.754	328.850	329.966	5.6	0.7	0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(1)(2)	326.607	327.843	328.605	5.4	0.6	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(1)(2)	326.630	327.861	328.622	5.4	0.6	0.2
Fuels and utilities	285.742	286.151	285.958	3.4	0.1	-0.1
Household energy	244.662	244.239	243.987	2.8	-0.3	-0.1
Energy services(1)	246.089	245.570	245.440	2.6	-0.3	-0.1
Electricity(1)	272.710	272.386	272.976	1.7	0.1	0.2
Utility (piped) gas service(1)	198.154	197.136	195.274	5.6	-1.5	-0.9
Household furnishings and operations	128.894	129.047	128.729	-0.9	-0.1	-0.2
Apparel	116.279	120.784	121.617	0.7	4.6	0.7
Transportation	199.001	201.030	203.506	5.1	2.3	1.2
Private transportation	193.345	195.089	197.594	5.5	2.2	1.3
New and used motor vehicles(3)	99.291	100.007	100.363	-1.2	1.1	0.4
New vehicles	148.786	149.781	149.494	1.0	0.5	-0.2
New cars and trucks(3)(4)	103.325	104.024	103.836	1.0	0.5	-0.2
New cars(4)	145.927	146.679	146.411	0.2	0.3	-0.2
Used cars and trucks	131.723	132.307	133.733	-4.5	1.5	1.1
Motor fuel	210.265	214.221	221.855	20.4	5.5	3.6
Gasoline (all types)	209.298	213.296	220.993	20.2	5.6	3.6
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4)	206.637	210.460	218.145	20.7	5.6	3.7
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5)	200.136	204.449	212.184	18.2	6.0	3.8
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4)	207.014	211.541	218.508	18.8	5.6	3.3
Medical Care	476.005	474.386	475.647	2.4	-0.1	0.3
Medical care commodities	361.439	362.890	364.078	3.6	0.7	0.3
Medical care services	512.451	509.700	510.971	2.0	-0.3	0.2
Professional services	353.515	353.075	353.935	2.4	0.1	0.2
Recreation(3)	112.584	112.937	112.930	1.5	0.3	0.0
Education and communication(3)	136.460	137.112	135.530	-2.2	-0.7	-1.2
Other goods and services	411.956	412.154	411.921	1.3	0.0	-0.1
Commodity and Service Group						
All Items	250.814	252.252	252.949	3.1	0.9	0.3
Commodities	178.141	179.637	180.523	1.8	1.3	0.5
Commodities less food & beverages	141.312	142.872	143.789	2.3	1.8	0.6
Nondurables less food & beverages	178.480	181.496	183.433	5.5	2.8	1.1
Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel	222.348	224.490	227.175	7.3	2.2	1.2
Durables	107.157	107.494	107.559	-1.8	0.4	0.1
Services	318.074	319.440	319.945	3.8	0.6	0.2
Rent of shelter(2)	330.737	332.665	333.584	5.3	0.9	0.3
Transportation services	292.278	295.116	297.076	3.5	1.6	0.7

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 West (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jan. 2017	Feb. 2017	Mar. 2017	Mar. 2016	Jan. 2017	Feb. 2017
Other services	342.567	343.590	342.105	0.7	-0.1	-0.4
Special aggregate indexes:						
All items less medical care	240.525	242.097	242.767	3.1	0.9	0.3
All items less food	250.764	252.238	252.923	3.4	0.9	0.3
All items less shelter	227.528	228.826	229.460	1.9	0.8	0.3
Commodities less food	145.419	146.960	147.856	2.3	1.7	0.6
Nondurables	215.340	217.527	218.913	3.0	1.7	0.6
Nondurables less food	183.839	186.725	188.555	5.3	2.6	1.0
Nondurables less food and apparel	224.928	226.907	229.334	6.7	2.0	1.1
Services less rent of shelter(2)	337.665	338.443	338.458	1.9	0.2	0.0
Services less medical care services	304.543	306.169	306.623	4.0	0.7	0.1
Energy	228.035	230.081	234.283	11.5	2.7	1.8
All items less energy	254.573	255.978	256.418	2.5	0.7	0.2
All items less food and energy	255.749	257.189	257.574	2.8	0.7	0.1
Commodities less food and energy commodities	138.646	139.911	140.033	-0.5	1.0	0.1
Energy commodities	215.030	219.042	226.565	20.2	5.4	3.4
Services less energy services	323.459	324.947	325.493	3.9	0.6	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) Index is on a December 1982=100 base.
(3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.
(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.
Regions defined as the four Census regions. West includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.
NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date. Data not seasonally adjusted.