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Consumer Price Index, Phoenix area – February 2019

Area prices were down 0.3 percent over the past two months, up 2.1 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Phoenix area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), declined 0.3 percent for the two months ending in February 2019, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See [table A](#).) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the February decrease was influenced by lower prices for gasoline and recreation. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bi-monthly changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U increased 2.1 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) Energy prices declined 0.3 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of electricity. The index for all items less food and energy advanced 2.3 percent over the year. (See [table 1](#).)

Food

Food prices increased 1.1 percent for the two months ending in February. (See [table 1](#).) Prices for food at home rose 1.2 percent, and prices for food away from home increased 0.9 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices advanced 2.1 percent. Prices for food away from home advanced 3.3 percent since a year ago, and prices for food at home increased 1.1 percent.

Energy

The energy index decreased 7.3 percent for the two months ending in February. The decrease was mainly due to lower prices for gasoline (-11.7 percent). Prices for natural gas service declined 1.5 percent, and prices for electricity decreased 1.1 percent for the same period.

Energy prices declined 0.3 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for electricity (-4.1 percent). Prices for natural gas service decreased 7.8 percent, but prices paid for gasoline advanced 3.4 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 the latest two-month period. Higher prices for shelter (0.8 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for new vehicles (-2.9 percent) and recreation (-2.5 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 2.3 percent. Components contributing to the increase included shelter (5.6 percent) and recreation (3.0 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were price declines in new vehicles (-10.0 percent), education and communication (-3.1 percent), and apparel (-1.5 percent).

The April 2019 Consumer Price Index for the Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale area is scheduled to be released on May 10, 2019.

Consumer Price Index Geographic Revision for 2018

In January 2018, BLS introduced a new geographic area sample for the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This index changed to a bimonthly publication schedule beginning in February, 2018. Additional information on the geographic revision is available at: www.bls.gov/cpi/additional-resources/geographic-revision-2018.htm.

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 Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale metropolitan area covered in this release consists of Maricopa and Pinal Counties in the State of Arizona.

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 Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale (December 2001=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Dec. 2018	Jan. 2019	Feb. 2019	Feb. 2018	Dec. 2018	Jan. 2019
Expenditure category						
All items	140.083	-	139.660	2.1	-0.3	-
Food and beverages	145.801	-	147.557	1.9	1.2	-
Food	146.886	-	148.446	2.1	1.1	-
Food at home	141.436	141.714	143.179	1.1	1.2	1.0
Cereals and bakery products	182.456	-	178.299	-1.7	-2.3	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	179.420	-	178.407	3.9	-0.6	-
Dairy and related products	107.515	-	104.299	-3.2	-3.0	-
Fruits and vegetables	122.423	-	134.084	7.9	9.5	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials	105.095	-	105.701	-0.2	0.6	-
Other food at home	138.092	-	139.795	-1.7	1.2	-
Food away from home	155.524	-	156.846	3.3	0.9	-
Food away from home	155.524	-	156.846	3.3	0.9	-
Alcoholic beverages	136.483	-	140.145	-0.4	2.7	-
Housing	143.856	-	144.537	4.4	0.5	-
Shelter	149.537	149.836	150.681	5.6	0.8	0.6
Rent of primary residence	156.120	157.187	157.750	5.5	1.0	0.4
Owners' equiv. rent of residences	148.644	149.017	149.833	5.7	0.8	0.5
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence	148.644	149.017	149.833	5.7	0.8	0.5
Fuels and utilities	157.916	-	156.708	-1.8	-0.8	-
Household energy	157.147	156.635	155.412	-4.5	-1.1	-0.8
Energy services	156.929	156.439	155.160	-4.6	-1.1	-0.8
Electricity	167.077	166.674	165.274	-4.1	-1.1	-0.8
Utility (piped) gas service	105.370	104.478	103.799	-7.8	-1.5	-0.6
Household furnishings and operations	99.656	-	98.805	0.9	-0.9	-
Apparel	139.874	-	138.691	-1.5	-0.8	-
Transportation	127.383	-	123.137	-1.3	-3.3	-
Private transportation	129.969	-	125.196	-1.6	-3.7	-
New and used motor vehicles	93.218	-	92.200	-6.4	-1.1	-
New vehicles	95.577	-	92.839	-10.0	-2.9	-
Used cars and trucks	83.951	-	85.272	1.9	1.6	-
Motor fuel	234.562	219.303	207.253	3.4	-11.6	-5.5
Gasoline (all types)	234.424	219.157	207.069	3.4	-11.7	-5.5
Gasoline, unleaded regular(1)	235.152	219.431	207.090	3.3	-11.9	-5.6
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(1)	248.251	232.192	219.045	3.6	-11.8	-5.7
Gasoline, unleaded premium(1)	233.649	220.746	210.009	4.0	-10.1	-4.9
Motor vehicle insurance	172.093	-	172.093	0.7	0.0	-
Medical care	175.439	-	176.786	-	0.8	-
Recreation	120.377	-	117.336	3.0	-2.5	-
Education and communication	116.721	-	116.427	-3.1	-0.3	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care	196.180	-	196.746	-4.3	0.3	-
Other goods and services	144.940	-	144.583	-1.0	-0.2	-
Commodity and service group						
All items	140.083	-	139.660	2.1	-0.3	-
Commodities	121.675	-	120.134	-0.4	-1.3	-
Commodities less food & beverages	109.251	-	106.203	-1.8	-2.8	-
Nondurables less food & beverages	144.915	-	138.976	0.7	-4.1	-
Durables	79.246	-	78.510	-5.1	-0.9	-
Services	152.806	-	153.112	3.4	0.2	-
Special aggregate indexes						

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 Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale (December 2001=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Dec. 2018	Jan. 2019	Feb. 2019	Feb. 2018	Dec. 2018	Jan. 2019
All items less medical care	138.044	-	137.500	2.0	-0.4	-
All items less shelter.....	135.091	-	133.858	0.2	-0.9	-
Commodities less food	110.284	-	107.517	-1.7	-2.5	-
Nondurables	145.639	-	143.625	1.3	-1.4	-
Nondurables less food.....	144.196	-	139.113	0.6	-3.5	-
Services less rent of shelter	156.327	-	155.550	0.9	-0.5	-
Services less medical care services.....	149.839	-	150.024	3.4	0.1	-
Energy	192.976	185.383	178.969	-0.3	-7.3	-3.5
All items less energy	137.031	-	137.369	2.3	0.2	-
All items less food and energy	135.453	-	135.625	2.3	0.1	-

Footnotes

(1) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

- Data not available

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.