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Consumer Price Index, Riverside Area – September 2020

Area prices were up 0.5 percent over the past two months, up 1.7 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Riverside area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), increased 0.5 percent for the two months ending in September 2020, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the September increase was influenced by higher prices for apparel. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bi-monthly changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U rose 1.7 percent. The index for all items less food and energy increased 1.4 percent over the year. Food prices rose 6.7 percent. Energy prices declined 3.2 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. (See [table 1.](#))

Food

Food prices increased 0.7 percent for the two months ending in September. (See [table 1.](#)) Prices for food at home increased 1.4 percent. Higher prices for fruits and vegetables (5.2 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for meats, poultry, fish, and eggs (-1.8 percent). Prices for food away from home inched down 0.1 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices rose 6.7 percent. Prices for food at home increased 9.3 percent since a year ago, led by higher prices for fruits and vegetables (15.0 percent). Prices for food away from home advanced 3.9 percent.

Energy

The energy index rose 1.3 percent for the two months ending in September. The increase was mainly due to higher prices for gasoline (2.5 percent). Prices for electricity were unchanged, while prices for natural gas service decreased 0.5 percent for the same period.

Energy prices declined 3.2 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-13.9 percent). Prices paid for electricity jumped 19.2 percent, and prices for natural gas service increased 13.8 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.4 percent in the latest two-month period. Higher prices for apparel (15.5 percent), used cars and trucks (7.7 percent), and shelter (0.2 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for new vehicles (-1.9 percent), household furnishings and operations (-0.8 percent), and medical care (-0.7 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy increased 1.4 percent. Components contributing to the increase included medical care (4.8 percent) and shelter (2.4 percent). Partly offsetting the increases was a price decrease in new and used motor vehicles (-3.2 percent).

The November 2020 Consumer Price Index for the Riverside area is scheduled to be released on December 10, 2020.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Impact on September 2020 Consumer Price Index Data

Data collection by personal visit for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) program has been suspended since March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in September was affected by the temporary closing or limited operations of certain types of establishments. These factors resulted in an increase in the number of prices considered temporarily unavailable and imputed.

While the CPI program attempted to collect as much data as possible, many indexes are based on smaller amounts of collected prices than usual, and a small number of indexes that are normally published were not published this month. Additional information is available at <https://www.bls.gov/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-consumer-price-index.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/pub/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 Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario metropolitan area covered in this release consists of Riverside and San Bernardino 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 Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario (December 2017=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jul. 2020	Aug. 2020	Sep. 2020	Sep. 2019	Jul. 2020	Aug. 2020
Expenditure category						
All items.....	107.640	-	108.201	1.7	0.5	-
Food and beverages	110.783	-	111.604	6.7	0.7	-
Food	111.011	-	111.837	6.7	0.7	-
Food at home	109.270	110.587	110.843	9.3	1.4	0.2
Cereals and bakery products	116.199	-	115.704	10.8	-0.4	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....	108.036	-	106.071	5.0	-1.8	-
Dairy and related products	103.481	-	107.647	7.3	4.0	-
Fruits and vegetables.....	111.362	-	117.177	15.0	5.2	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials.....	112.022	-	115.327	7.9	3.0	-
Other food at home	106.548	-	107.789	9.9	1.2	-
Food away from home.....	112.518	-	112.461	3.9	-0.1	-
Alcoholic beverages	107.212	-	107.944	7.6	0.7	-
Housing	110.441	-	110.550	3.3	0.1	-
Shelter	110.560	110.544	110.781	2.4	0.2	0.2
Rent of primary residence	111.259	111.381	111.753	3.6	0.4	0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of residences	110.760	110.877	110.999	2.5	0.2	0.1
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence.....	110.760	110.877	110.999	2.5	0.2	0.1
Fuels and utilities.....	115.268	-	115.300	11.8	0.0	-
Household energy	114.128	113.995	114.046	17.2	-0.1	0.0
Energy services.....	114.413	114.310	114.298	17.4	-0.1	0.0
Electricity	110.345	110.335	110.345	19.2	0.0	0.0
Utility (piped) gas service	130.434	129.941	129.837	13.8	-0.5	-0.1
Household furnishings and operations.....	102.735	-	101.934	1.4	-0.8	-
Apparel	92.714	-	107.097	0.6	15.5	-
Transportation	100.702	-	100.858	-7.3	0.2	-
Private transportation	102.123	-	102.148	-6.0	0.0	-
New and used motor vehicles	97.758	-	96.256	-3.2	-1.5	-
New vehicles	103.427	-	101.424	1.0	-1.9	-
Used cars and trucks.....	102.638	-	110.518	9.2	7.7	-
Motor fuel	101.290	103.414	103.754	-14.0	2.4	0.3
Gasoline (all types).....	101.478	103.641	104.005	-13.9	2.5	0.4
Gasoline, unleaded regular(1).....	101.372	103.526	103.940	-14.1	2.5	0.4
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(1).....	102.596	105.437	105.862	-12.3	3.2	0.4
Gasoline, unleaded premium(1).....	101.764	103.858	103.953	-13.0	2.2	0.1
Motor vehicle insurance	116.349	-	116.349	5.7	0.0	-
Medical care	110.356	-	109.610	4.8	-0.7	-
Recreation	103.275	-	102.647	1.3	-0.6	-
Education and communication	106.717	-	106.771	1.1	0.1	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care.....	118.434	-	119.179	4.3	0.6	-
Other goods and services	107.798	-	109.131	3.4	1.2	-
Commodity and service group						
All items.....	107.640	-	108.201	1.7	0.5	-
Commodities	104.650	-	106.268	0.7	1.5	-
Commodities less food & beverages.....	101.019	-	103.104	-2.8	2.1	-
Nondurables less food & beverages	98.454	-	102.736	-5.7	4.3	-
Durables	103.246	-	102.981	0.9	-0.3	-
Services.....	109.486	-	109.428	2.3	-0.1	-
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 Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario (December 2017=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jul. 2020	Aug. 2020	Sep. 2020	Sep. 2019	Jul. 2020	Aug. 2020
All items less medical care	107.454	-	108.105	1.5	0.6	-
All items less shelter.....	106.015	-	106.776	1.3	0.7	-
Commodities less food	101.155	-	103.201	-2.5	2.0	-
Nondurables	105.002	-	107.446	0.8	2.3	-
Nondurables less food.....	98.875	-	102.968	-5.0	4.1	-
Services less rent of shelter	107.998	-	107.468	2.1	-0.5	-
Services less medical care services.....	109.153	-	109.092	1.9	-0.1	-
Energy	107.068	108.276	108.499	-3.2	1.3	0.2
All items less energy	107.667	-	108.151	2.1	0.4	-
All items less food and energy	107.156	-	107.584	1.4	0.4	-

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.