

NEW ENGLAND INFORMATION OFFICE  
Boston, Mass.

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## AVERAGE ENERGY PRICES IN BOSTON-BROCKTON-NASHUA – FEBRUARY 2012

Boston area consumers paid prices above the U.S. city average for utility (piped) gas and electricity in February, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Utility (piped) gas prices were 25.8 percent higher in Boston than nationwide, and electricity prices were 18.8 percent higher locally. Deborah A. Brown, the Bureau’s acting regional commissioner, noted that the percent differential between local and national utility (piped) gas and electricity prices narrowed slightly since February 2011. Gasoline prices in Boston remained close to the national average during this time period. (See table A.)

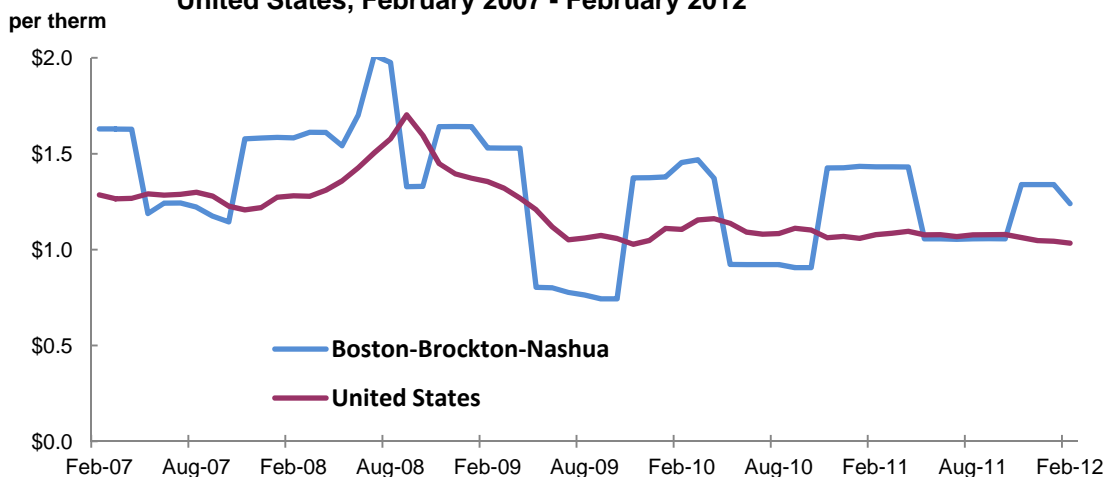
**Table A. Average prices of energy products, United States and the Boston area, February 2011 and February 2012**

Energy product	February 2011			February 2012		
	United States	Boston area	Percent difference	United States	Boston area	Percent difference
Electricity (per KWH)	0.125	0.152	21.6	0.128	0.152	18.8
Gasoline (per gallon)	3.215	3.201	-0.4	3.622	3.623	0.0
Utility (piped) gas (per therm)	1.095	1.432	30.8	0.986	1.240	25.8

NOTE: a positive percent difference measures how much the price in the Boston area is above the national price, while a negative difference reflects a lower price in the area.

A therm—a measure of constant heating value—of utility (piped) gas, commonly referred to as natural gas, in the Boston area averaged \$1.240 in February 2012, a decrease of 13.4 percent from the previous year. Nationwide, a therm averaged \$0.986 in February 2012, down 10.0 percent over the year. Local natural gas prices are more subject to seasonal price fluctuations, compared with the nation. (See chart 1.)

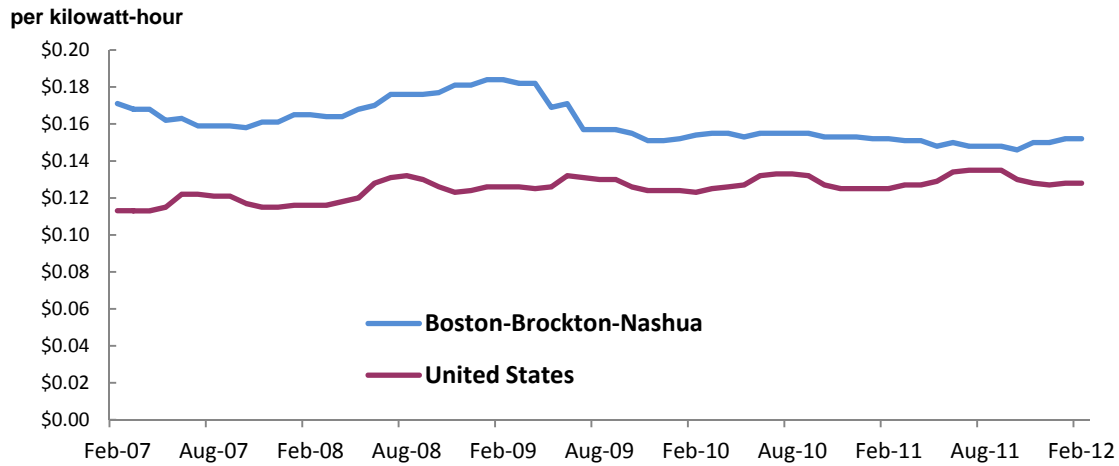
**Chart 1. Average prices for utility (piped) gas, Boston area and the United States, February 2007 - February 2012**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

A kilowatt-hour (kWh) of electricity cost Boston area consumers \$0.152 in February 2012, unchanged from a year earlier. Nationwide, electricity prices averaged \$0.128 in February 2012, 2.4 percent higher than a year ago. Over the last five years, the price of electricity in Boston has always exceeded that for the nation; however, the gap has narrowed considerably during this 60-month period, remaining under 25.0 percent since March 2010. (See chart 2.)

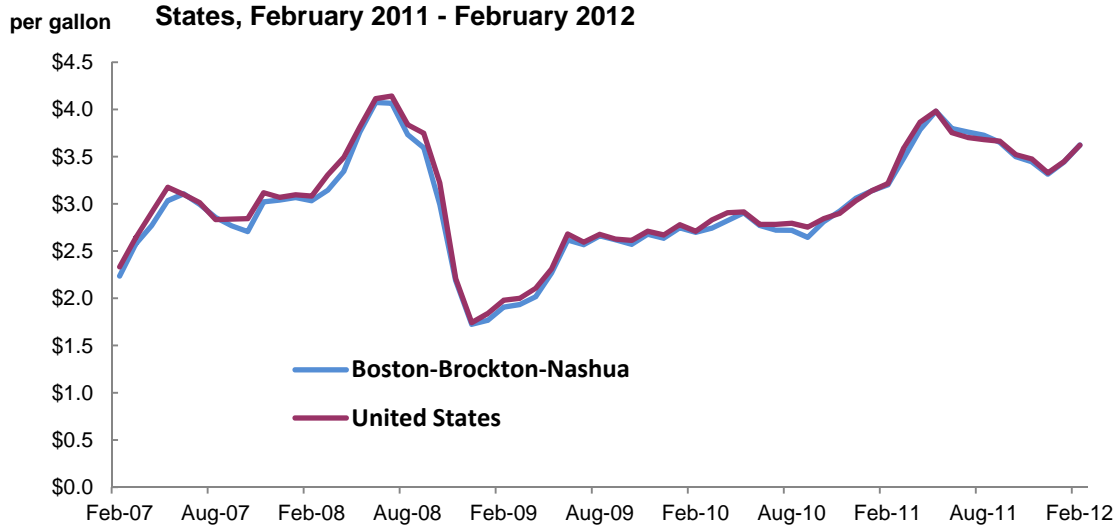
**Chart 2. Average prices for electricity, Boston area and the United States, February 2007 - February 2012**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

In February 2012, a gallon of gasoline averaged \$3.623 in the Boston area, rising 13.2 percent over the year. Nationwide, the average price of gasoline rose 12.7 percent, to \$3.622 per gallon. Although gasoline prices can be volatile from month to month, national and local prices have moved in tandem over the last five years. (See chart 3.)

**Chart 3. Average prices for gasoline, Boston area and the United States, February 2011 - February 2012**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

The Boston-Brockton-Nashua, Mass.-N.H.-Maine-Conn. consolidated area covered in this release is comprised of Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth and Suffolk Counties and parts of Bristol, Hampden, and Worcester Counties in Massachusetts; parts of Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, and Strafford Counties in New Hampshire; part of York County in Maine; and part of Windham County in Connecticut.

## Additional information

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 617-565-2072; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

For personal assistance or further information on the CPI data, as well as other Bureau data, contact the Boston Information Office at (617) 565-2327 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET. Information on the Consumer Price Index and other surveys and programs is available on our Web site at [www.bls.gov/ro1/](http://www.bls.gov/ro1/).

## Technical Information

Average prices for electricity, utility (piped) gas, and gasoline are published monthly for the U.S. city average, the 4 regions, the 3 population size classes, 10 region/size-class cross-classifications, and the 14 largest local index areas. For electricity, average prices per kilowatt-hour (kWh) and per 500 kWh are published. For utility (piped) gas, average prices per therm, per 40 therms, and per 100 therms are published. For gasoline, the average price per gallon is published. Average prices for commonly available grades of gasoline are published as well as the average price across all grades.

Price quotes for 40 therms and 100 therms of utility (piped) gas and for 500 kWh of electricity are collected in sample outlets for use in the average price programs only. Since they are for specified consumption amounts, they are not used in the CPI. All other price quotes used for average price estimation are regular CPI data.

With the exception of the 40 therms, 100 therms, and 500 kWh price quotes, all eligible prices are converted to a price per normalized quantity. These prices are then used to estimate a price for a defined fixed quantity.

**Table B. Average prices for utility (piped) gas, electricity, and gasoline, United States and the Boston-Brockton-Nashua area, February 2011 – February 2012**

Year and month	Utility (piped) gas per therm		Electricity per kilowatt hour		Gasoline, all types, per gallon	
	U.S. city average	Boston- Brockton- Nashua	U.S. city average	Boston- Brockton- Nashua	U.S. city average	Boston- Brockton- Nashua
2011						
February	1.095	1.432	0.125	0.152	3.215	3.201
March	1.077	1.432	0.127	0.151	3.594	3.488
April	1.078	1.431	0.127	0.151	3.863	3.783
May	1.068	1.056	0.129	0.148	3.982	3.981
June	1.077	1.056	0.134	0.150	3.753	3.797
July	1.078	1.054	0.135	0.148	3.703	3.761
August	1.079	1.056	0.135	0.148	3.680	3.727
September	1.063	1.057	0.135	0.148	3.664	3.652
October	1.047	1.056	0.130	0.146	3.521	3.499
November	1.044	1.339	0.128	0.150	3.475	3.445
December	1.034	1.339	0.127	0.150	3.329	3.314
2012						
January	1.021	1.339	0.128	0.152	3.447	3.442
February	0.986	1.240	0.128	0.152	3.622	3.623