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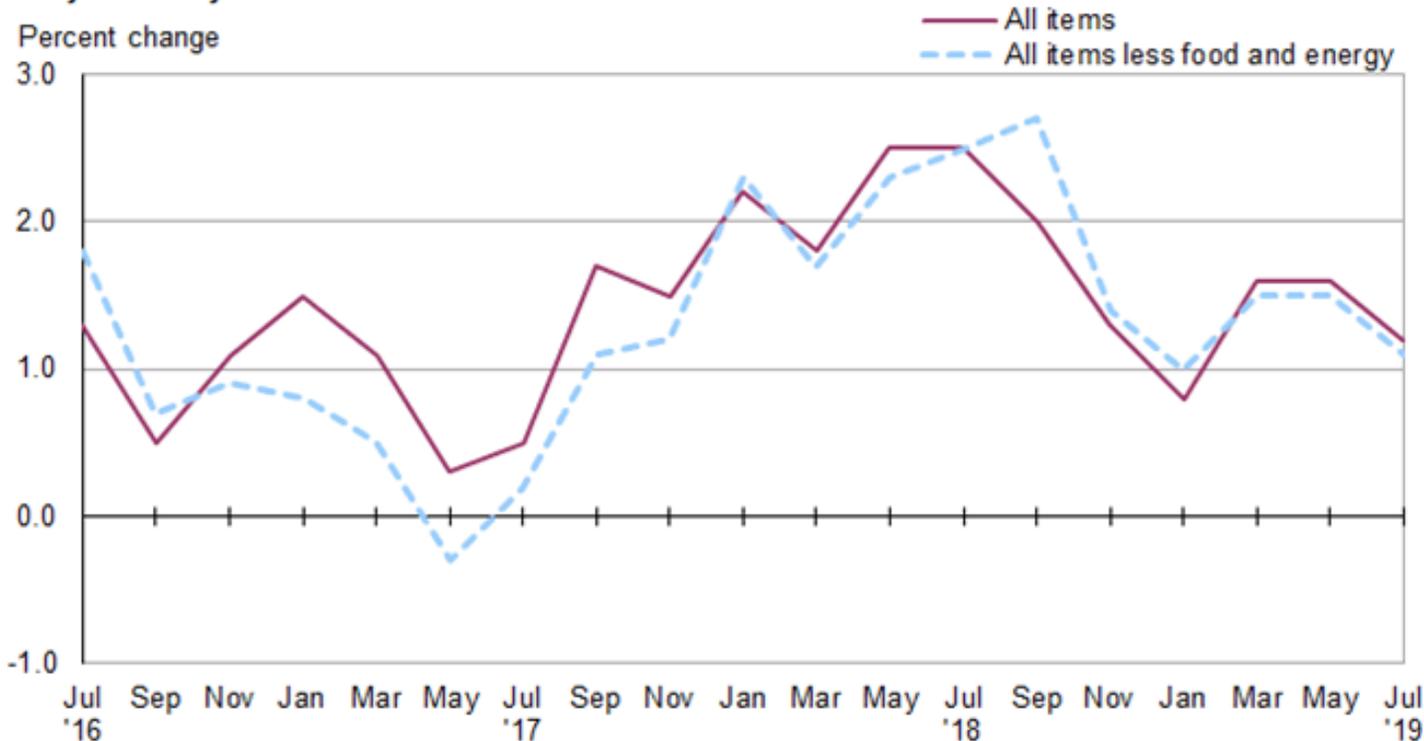
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Consumer Price Index, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria – July 2019 **Area prices down 0.3 percent since May, up 1.2 percent over the year**

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria decreased 0.3 percent from May to July, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau’s regional commissioner, noted that the recent decrease was due mainly to a 0.2-percent decline in the all items less food and energy index. The food index and the energy index also decreased since May, down 0.6 and 0.9 percent, respectively. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U advanced 1.2 percent, primarily reflecting a 1.1-percent increase in the all items less food and energy index. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) Since July 2018, the food index also advanced, up 2.6 percent, while the energy index decreased 0.6 percent. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, July 2016–July 2019



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

After a 0.7-percent increase from March to May, the food index declined 0.6 percent over the last two months. Prices for food at home decreased 1.2 percent. Within the food at home component, prices were lower for processed fish and seafood, and frozen fruits and vegetables; while prices were higher for chicken and spices, seasonings, condiments, and sauces. Food away from home prices increased over the last two months, edging up 0.3 percent.

Food prices increased 2.6 percent over the year. Prices were higher for both food at home (3.0 percent) and food away from home (2.1 percent) since July 2018.

Energy

Since May, the energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, declined 0.9 percent, due to lower prices for gasoline (-3.4 percent) and for utility (piped) gas service (-1.5 percent). Prices were higher for electricity (3.5 percent) over the past two months.

Energy prices decreased 0.6 percent since July 2018, due to lower prices for gasoline (-4.2 percent). Prices increased for both utility (piped) gas service prices (15.4 percent) and electricity prices (0.1 percent) over the year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy decreased 0.2 percent since May. Decreases in prices for apparel (-7.8 percent) and new vehicles (-2.0 percent) led the decline. Increased prices for household furnishings and operations (2.3 percent), among others, moderated the decrease in the all items less food and energy index from May to July.

Since July 2018, the index for all items less food and energy rose 1.1 percent. The advance was led by higher prices for shelter (0.9 percent); household furnishings and operations (6.4 percent) and medical care (3.2 percent) were among the indexes that had increases over the year. Education and communication prices were down 2.6 percent since July 2018.

Table A. Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	2-month	12-month								
January.....	-1.1	-0.2	-0.2	1.5	0.2	1.5	0.9	2.2	0.5	0.8
March.....	1.2	0.2	0.8	1.1	0.4	1.1	-0.1	1.8	0.7	1.6
May.....	0.7	0.6	0.8	1.2	0.0	0.3	0.7	2.5	0.6	1.6
July.....	-0.3	0.3	-0.2	1.3	0.0	0.5	0.1	2.5	-0.3	1.2
September.....	0.6	0.7	-0.3	0.5	0.9	1.7	0.4	2.0		
November.....	-0.4	0.5	0.2	1.1	0.0	1.5	-0.7	1.3		

The Consumer Price Index for September 2019 is scheduled to be released on Thursday, October 10, 2019, at 8:30 a.m. (EDT).

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria is published bi-monthly. 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 94 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 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 75 urban areas across the country from about 5,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 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/pdf/homch17.pdf.

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 **Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MA-WV, Core Based Statistical Area** includes the District of Columbia; the counties of Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's in Maryland; the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas, and Manassas Park and the counties of Arlington, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren in Virginia; and the county of Jefferson in West Virginia.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	May 2019	Jun. 2019	Jul. 2019	Jul. 2018	May 2019	Jun. 2019
All items.....		265.967		265.170	1.2	-0.3	
Food and beverages		254.663		253.097	2.2	-0.6	
Food		260.090		258.656	2.6	-0.6	
Food at home		250.262	245.619	247.149	3.0	-1.2	0.6
Cereals and bakery products		323.442		324.293	1.7	0.3	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		271.907		265.394	2.8	-2.4	
Dairy and related products		232.835		237.810	0.7	2.1	
Fruits and vegetables		282.810		274.063	6.6	-3.1	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)		215.845		223.883	10.8	3.7	
Other food at home		203.695		197.158	-1.5	-3.2	
Food away from home.....		273.439		274.167	2.1	0.3	
Alcoholic beverages		202.096		199.203	-2.4	-1.4	
Housing		277.060		277.925	1.7	0.3	
Shelter		332.978	333.308	332.426	0.9	-0.2	-0.3
Rent of primary residence		364.882	364.476	365.851	1.7	0.3	0.4
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....		339.457	339.629	340.111	1.0	0.2	0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)		339.457	339.629	340.111	1.0	0.2	0.1
Fuels and utilities.....		236.197		241.915	4.3	2.4	
Household energy		184.988	190.096	188.797	3.5	2.1	-0.7
Energy services.....		189.508	194.839	193.522	3.6	2.1	-0.7
Electricity		210.044	218.356	217.307	0.1	3.5	-0.5
Utility (piped) gas service		140.964	140.515	138.780	15.4	-1.5	-1.2
Household furnishings and operations.....		110.116		112.681	6.4	2.3	
Apparel		170.495		157.230	0.2	-7.8	
Transportation		220.493		219.883	-0.4	-0.3	
Private transportation		219.071		218.131	-0.6	-0.4	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....		94.838		95.288	0.2	0.5	
New vehicles(1).....		198.691		194.686	-1.5	-2.0	
Used cars and trucks(1)		297.790		304.944	1.3	2.4	
Motor fuel		261.803	251.296	252.909	-4.2	-3.4	0.6
Gasoline (all types).....		259.057	248.622	250.204	-4.2	-3.4	0.6
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		253.050	242.485	244.193	-4.3	-3.5	0.7
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		258.297	248.682	251.417	-2.7	-2.7	1.1
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		273.918	266.365	266.098	-3.3	-2.9	-0.1
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....		841.671		845.972	-1.4	0.5	
Medical care		457.446		461.061	3.2	0.8	
Recreation(3).....		118.326		117.384	-0.1	-0.8	
Education and communication(3).....		150.851		150.598	-2.6	-0.2	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1).....		1,379.467		1,386.766	-1.3	0.5	
Other goods and services		417.688		419.337	2.8	0.4	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		184.526		181.460	0.4	-1.7	

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, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	May 2019	Jun. 2019	Jul. 2019	Jul. 2018	May 2019	Jun. 2019
Commodities less food and beverages		148.652		145.108	-0.8	-2.4	
Nondurables less food and beverages...		200.917		193.191	-1.2	-3.8	
Durables		101.384		100.992	-0.4	-0.4	
Services.....		339.568		341.164	1.7	0.5	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		238.967		238.079	1.4	-0.4	
All items less medical care		256.932		255.918	1.0	-0.4	
Commodities less food.....		151.195		147.658	-0.9	-2.3	
Nondurables		226.985		222.252	0.7	-2.1	
Nondurables less food.....		200.899		193.559	-1.3	-3.7	
Services less rent of shelter(2).....		358.500		362.891	2.5	1.2	
Services less medical care services.....		328.040		329.411	1.3	0.4	
Energy		222.920	221.017	221.020	-0.6	-0.9	0.0
All items less energy		272.636		271.918	1.3	-0.3	
All items less food and energy		276.171		275.580	1.1	-0.2	

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a November 1977=100 base.
- (2) Indexes on a November 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.