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## **Consumer Price Index, San Diego Area – September 2020**

**Area prices were down 0.4 percent over the past two months, up 1.1 percent from a year ago**

Prices in the San Diego area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), decreased 0.4 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 decrease was influenced by lower prices for household furnishings and operations and food at home. (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 1.1 percent. The index for all items less food and energy increased 1.5 percent over the year. Food prices rose 4.2 percent. Energy prices dropped 11.5 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. (See [table 1](#).)

### **Food**

Food prices decreased 0.7 percent for the two months ending in September. (See [table 1](#).) Prices for food at home decreased 1.6 percent led by nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials (-2.8 percent). Prices for food away from home advanced 0.3 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices rose 4.2 percent. Prices for food away from home advanced 5.6 percent. Prices for food at home increased 3.0 percent since a year ago led by meats, poultry, fish, and eggs (7.0 percent).

### **Energy**

The energy index decreased 0.7 percent for the two months ending in September. The decrease was mainly due to lower prices for gasoline (-1.0 percent). Prices for electricity were unchanged, while prices for natural gas service decreased 0.7 percent for the same period.

Energy prices dropped 11.5 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-17.2 percent). Prices paid for natural gas service jumped 28.3 percent, but prices for electricity decreased 7.0 percent during the past year.

### **All items less food and energy**

The index for all items less food and energy decreased 0.3 percent in the latest two-month period. Lower prices for alcoholic beverages (-4.7 percent), household furnishings and operations (-3.8 percent), and recreation (-0.6 percent) were partially offset by higher prices for used cars and trucks (7.7 percent) and other goods and services (1.4 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy increased 1.5 percent. Components contributing to the increase included medical care (5.3 percent), recreation (4.7 percent), and shelter (1.9 percent). Partly offsetting the increases was a price decrease in apparel (-9.4 percent).

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

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19) 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](http://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](http://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 San Diego-Carlsbad, CA metropolitan area covered in this release consists of San Diego County 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 San Diego-Carlsbad (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)**

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jul. 2020	Aug. 2020	Sep. 2020	Sep. 2019	Jul. 2020	Aug. 2020
<b>Expenditure category</b>						
All items.....	305.611	-	304.443	1.1	-0.4	-
All items (1967=100).....	1,033.363	-	1,029.416	-	-	-
Food and beverages.....	273.727	-	270.656	3.7	-1.1	-
Food.....	271.517	-	269.523	4.2	-0.7	-
Food at home.....	241.546	240.661	237.596	3.0	-1.6	-1.3
Cereals and bakery products.....	278.901	-	276.331	6.1	-0.9	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....	257.597	-	253.671	7.0	-1.5	-
Dairy and related products.....	191.439	-	190.686	0.3	-0.4	-
Fruits and vegetables.....	263.305	-	259.588	-3.7	-1.4	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1).....	270.675	-	263.223	6.8	-2.8	-
Other food at home.....	225.615	-	220.690	2.3	-2.2	-
Food away from home.....	311.055	-	311.938	5.6	0.3	-
Alcoholic beverages.....	286.086	-	272.552	-1.2	-4.7	-
Housing.....	365.294	-	363.605	1.7	-0.5	-
Shelter.....	414.716	414.560	414.420	1.9	-0.1	0.0
Rent of primary residence(2).....	412.706	412.164	411.291	2.2	-0.3	-0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(2).....	440.546	441.271	440.818	2.2	0.1	-0.1
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(2).....	440.546	441.271	440.818	2.2	0.1	-0.1
Fuels and utilities.....	350.552	-	350.044	-1.1	-0.1	-
Household energy.....	321.113	320.900	320.310	-1.0	-0.3	-0.2
Energy services.....	317.590	317.350	317.042	-0.9	-0.2	-0.1
Electricity.....	301.433	301.433	301.433	-7.0	0.0	0.0
Utility (piped) gas service.....	265.242	264.395	263.306	28.3	-0.7	-0.4
Household furnishings and operations.....	197.981	-	190.539	2.2	-3.8	-
Apparel.....	155.592	-	155.118	-9.4	-0.3	-
Transportation.....	218.122	-	218.701	-6.6	0.3	-
Private transportation.....	216.534	-	216.732	-4.5	0.1	-
New and used motor vehicles(3).....	107.622	-	108.570	1.5	0.9	-
New vehicles(1).....	237.927	-	235.746	2.9	-0.9	-
Used cars and trucks(1).....	234.349	-	252.342	9.2	7.7	-
Motor fuel.....	250.256	250.093	247.731	-17.2	-1.0	-0.9
Gasoline (all types).....	250.223	250.017	247.633	-17.2	-1.0	-1.0
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....	258.293	256.966	254.488	-18.0	-1.5	-1.0
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....	218.677	222.320	221.455	-14.8	1.3	-0.4
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....	259.058	263.083	260.494	-14.2	0.6	-1.0
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....	535.557	-	526.040	-1.3	-1.8	-
Medical care.....	521.409	-	520.992	5.3	-0.1	-
Recreation(3).....	164.746	-	163.789	4.7	-0.6	-
Education and communication(3).....	135.065	-	134.857	3.6	-0.2	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1) ..	1,540.026	-	1,558.575	1.3	1.2	-
Other goods and services.....	417.682	-	423.334	4.4	1.4	-
<b>Commodity and service group</b>						
All items.....	305.611	-	304.443	1.1	-0.4	-
Commodities.....	207.012	-	205.325	0.2	-0.8	-
Commodities less food & beverages.....	171.588	-	170.657	-2.5	-0.5	-
Nondurables less food & beverages.....	198.880	-	195.762	-7.8	-1.6	-
Durables.....	142.237	-	143.346	5.2	0.8	-
Services.....	392.730	-	392.182	1.6	-0.1	-

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 San Diego-Carlsbad (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued**

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jul. 2020	Aug. 2020	Sep. 2020	Sep. 2019	Jul. 2020	Aug. 2020
<b>Special aggregate indexes</b>						
All items less medical care .....	295.448	-	294.246	0.8	-0.4	-
All items less shelter.....	262.485	-	261.018	0.6	-0.6	-
Commodities less food .....	176.845	-	175.299	-2.4	-0.9	-
Nondurables .....	238.178	-	235.093	-1.2	-1.3	-
Nondurables less food.....	207.332	-	203.214	-6.9	-2.0	-
Services less rent of shelter(2).....	386.189	-	385.314	1.1	-0.2	-
Services less medical care services.....	378.448	-	377.681	1.0	-0.2	-
Energy .....	271.177	270.999	269.255	-11.5	-0.7	-0.6
All items less energy .....	310.412	-	309.278	1.9	-0.4	-
All items less food and energy .....	318.690	-	317.751	1.5	-0.3	-

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.

- Data not available

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