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MOUNTAIN-PLAINS INFORMATION OFFICE: Kansas City, Mo.
Technical information: (816) 285-7000 BLSInfoKansasCity@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/mountain-plains
Media contact: (816) 285-7000

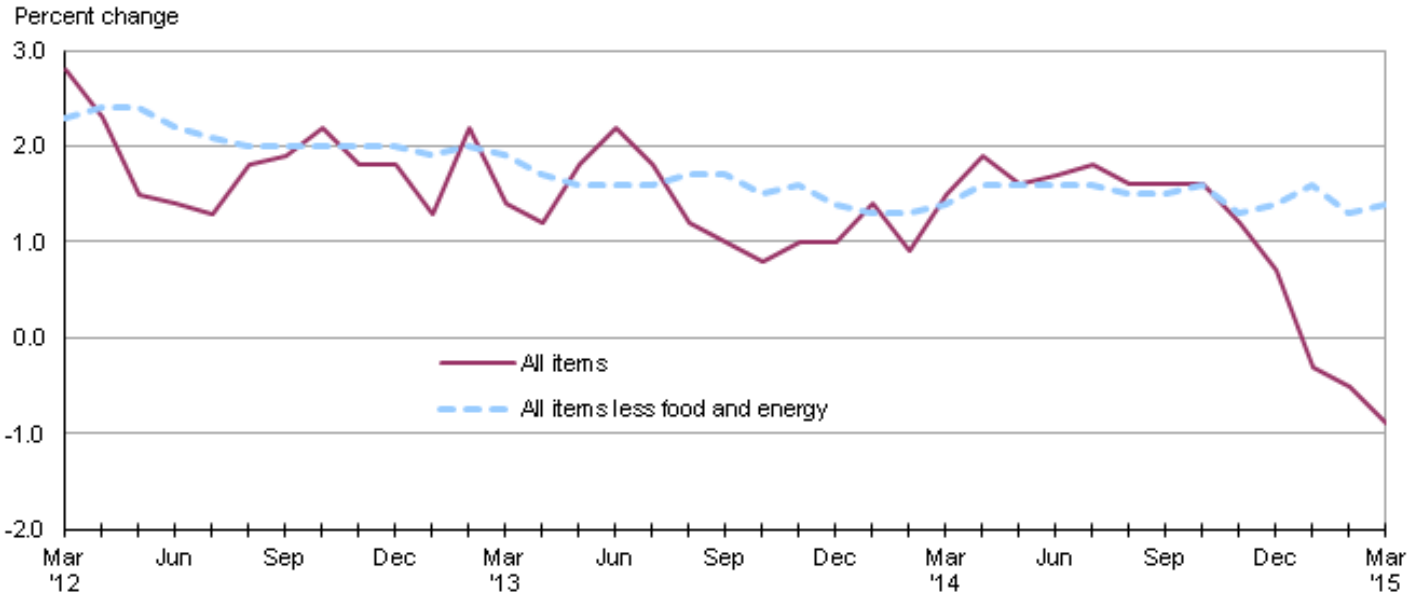
Consumer Price Index, Midwest Region – March 2015

Prices in the Midwest up 0.6 percent in March but 0.9 percent lower over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Midwest rose 0.6 percent in March, following an increase of 0.3 percent in February, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. The monthly gain was broad based, led by increases in the indexes for all items less food and energy (0.4 percent) and motor fuel (8.3 percent). Overall, the energy index was 3.7 percent higher while the index for food decreased 0.4 percent over the month.

The CPI-U for the Midwest declined 0.9 percent from March 2014 to March 2015. Food prices increased 1.8 percent and the energy index, which includes motor fuel and household fuels, fell 21.0 percent. Excluding food and energy, the CPI-U rose 1.4 percent over the year. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Midwest region, March 2012–March 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices in the Midwest declined 0.4 percent in March. The index for food at home decreased 0.7 percent while costs for food away from home were little changed (0.1 percent).

From March 2014 to March 2015, the index for food increased 1.8 percent. Rising costs for food at home (1.0 percent) and food away from home (3.1 percent) both contributed to the yearly advance.

Energy

The energy index rose 3.7 percent in March following an increase of 3.8 percent in February. Rising motor fuel prices, up 8.3 percent, were largely responsible for the monthly advance. Costs for utility (piped) gas service declined 0.5 percent and electricity prices registered little movement (0.1 percent) over the month.

Despite the monthly increase, the index for energy fell 21.0 percent from March 2014 to March 2015, led by a 32.8-percent drop in motor fuel prices. Costs for utility (piped) gas service were 21.9 percent lower over the year, while electricity prices advanced 4.9 percent.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy for the Midwest rose 0.4 percent in March. Expenditure categories registering higher prices over the month included shelter (0.3 percent), apparel (2.4 percent), and new and used motor vehicles (1.2 percent).

The index for all items less food and energy increased 1.4 percent from March 2014 to March 2015. Higher costs for shelter (2.3 percent) and medical care (2.2 percent) led the advance.

The Midwest Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) stood at 223.550 in March 2015. A typical market basket of goods and services that cost $100.00 in the 1982-84 base period cost $223.55 in March 2015. Because regional CPI data are not adjusted for seasonal price variation, consumers and businesses should be cautious in drawing conclusions about long-term retail price trends from short-term changes in the regional indexes.

CPI-W

In March, the Midwest Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) was 218.486 up 0.7 percent over the month. The CPI-W decreased 1.5 percent over the year.

Table A. Midwest region CPI-U 1-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month
January	0.5	1.9	0.6	2.8	0.1	1.3	0.5	1.4	-0.6	-0.3
February	0.3	2.2	0.2	2.7	1.1	2.2	0.6	0.9	0.3	-0.5
March	0.9	2.7	1.0	2.8	0.2	1.4	0.9	1.5	0.6	-0.9
April	0.7	3.3	0.2	2.3	-0.1	1.2	0.3	1.9		
May	0.6	3.8	-0.1	1.5	0.5	1.8	0.2	1.6		
June	0.0	3.9	-0.1	1.4	0.3	2.2	0.5	1.7		
July	0.1	3.8	0.0	1.3	-0.4	1.8	-0.3	1.8		
August	0.2	3.8	0.7	1.8	0.1	1.2	-0.2	1.6		
September	0.2	3.9	0.3	1.9	0.1	1.0	0.1	1.6		
October	-0.6	3.3	-0.3	2.2	-0.5	0.8	-0.5	1.6		
November	0.0	3.3	-0.4	1.8	-0.2	1.0	-0.6	1.2		
December	-0.2	2.8	-0.2	1.8	-0.2	1.0	-0.7	0.7		

The April 2015 Consumer Price Index for the Midwest region is scheduled to be released on Friday, May 22, 2015.

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 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 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 areas; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The Midwest region is comprised of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Midwest (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015	Mar. 2014	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015
Expenditure category						
All Items	221.545	222.301	223.550	-0.9	0.9	0.6
All items (December 1977=100)	360.466	361.696	363.728			
Food and beverages	239.433	239.275	238.426	1.8	-0.4	-0.4
Food	239.148	238.916	238.005	1.8	-0.5	-0.4
Food at home	231.378	230.747	229.093	1.0	-1.0	-0.7
Food away from home	252.035	252.483	252.839	3.1	0.3	0.1
Alcoholic beverages	240.980	241.966	242.094	1.2	0.5	0.1
Housing	211.328	211.179	211.611	1.0	0.1	0.2
Shelter	246.573	246.874	247.671	2.3	0.4	0.3
Rent of primary residence [1]	244.939	245.410	245.907	2.8	0.4	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of residences [1] [2]	250.385	250.690	251.079	1.9	0.3	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence [1] [2]	250.378	250.685	251.076	1.9	0.3	0.2
Fuels and utilities	217.721	215.005	215.017	-3.9	-1.2	0.0
Household energy	182.922	179.695	179.444	-5.8	-1.9	-0.1
Energy services [1]	189.470	186.000	185.834	-5.2	-1.9	-0.1
Electricity [1]	196.851	195.755	195.988	4.9	-0.4	0.1
Utility (piped) gas service [1]	167.872	160.257	159.376	-21.9	-5.1	-0.5
Household furnishings and operations	116.099	116.183	115.728	-1.5	-0.3	-0.4
Apparel	115.993	116.338	119.180	-2.8	2.7	2.4
Transportation	186.659	192.031	196.851	-10.2	5.5	2.5
Private transportation	180.875	186.370	191.410	-10.6	5.8	2.7
New and used motor vehicles [3]	98.024	98.552	99.690	0.5	1.7	1.2
New vehicles	139.278	140.017	140.770	1.6	1.1	0.5
New cars and trucks [3] [4]	98.557	99.092	99.671	1.7	1.1	0.6
New cars [4]	136.062	136.720	137.488	1.6	1.0	0.6
Used cars and trucks	141.597	143.466	147.134	-1.7	3.9	2.6
Motor fuel	179.847	200.255	216.852	-32.8	20.6	8.3
Gasoline (all types)	178.034	198.686	215.352	-32.8	21.0	8.4
Gasoline, unleaded regular [4]	174.164	194.779	211.598	-33.5	21.5	8.6
Gasoline, Unleaded midgrade [4] [5]	203.169	228.057	244.607	-31.1	20.4	7.3
Gasoline, unleaded premium [4]	190.240	208.943	224.100	-29.4	17.8	7.3
Medical Care	448.542	447.300	448.997	2.2	0.1	0.4
Medical care commodities	363.130	365.206	367.210	4.6	1.1	0.5
Medical care services	477.121	474.584	476.141	1.4	-0.2	0.3
Professional services	389.035	385.706	387.102	0.9	-0.5	0.4
Recreation [3]	117.892	117.470	117.834	0.5	0.0	0.3
Education and communication [3]	139.651	139.657	139.817	0.4	0.1	0.1
Other goods and services	398.280	397.738	399.511	1.5	0.3	0.4
Commodity and Service Group						
All Items	221.545	222.301	223.550	-0.9	0.9	0.6
Commodities	174.605	176.435	178.233	-4.3	2.1	1.0
Commodities less food & beverages	143.337	145.962	148.832	-8.0	3.8	2.0
Nondurables less food & beverages	179.848	184.760	190.312	-12.0	5.8	3.0
Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel	221.800	229.659	236.976	-14.7	6.8	3.2
Durables	106.515	107.062	107.504	-0.9	0.9	0.4
Services	270.031	269.730	270.445	1.5	0.2	0.3
Rent of shelter [2]	253.195	253.509	254.351	2.3	0.5	0.3

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 Midwest (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015	Mar. 2014	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015
Transportation services	290.298	290.801	291.422	2.7	0.4	0.2
Other services	326.324	325.980	326.611	1.2	0.1	0.2
Special aggregate indexes:						
All items less medical care	210.802	211.653	212.880	-1.1	1.0	0.6
All items less food	218.584	219.501	221.101	-1.3	1.2	0.7
All items less shelter	214.755	215.691	217.124	-2.2	1.1	0.7
Commodities less food	146.403	148.998	151.812	-7.6	3.7	1.9
Nondurables	209.039	211.580	214.134	-5.3	2.4	1.2
Nondurables less food	183.107	187.821	193.099	-11.3	5.5	2.8
Nondurables less food and apparel	222.209	229.469	236.166	-13.5	6.3	2.9
Services less rent of shelter [2]	304.224	303.202	303.812	0.8	-0.1	0.2
Services less medical care services	254.568	254.424	255.078	1.5	0.2	0.3
Energy	182.372	189.377	196.429	-21.0	7.7	3.7
All items less energy	228.107	228.223	228.883	1.4	0.3	0.3
All items less food and energy	226.789	226.969	227.923	1.4	0.5	0.4
Commodities less food and energy commodities	145.105	145.475	146.607	-0.4	1.0	0.8
Energy commodities	181.925	201.538	217.372	-32.3	19.5	7.9
Services less energy services	280.543	280.589	281.406	2.0	0.3	0.3

Footnotes
(1) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.
(2) Index is on a December 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.
Regions defined as the four Census regions. Midwest includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.
NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date. Data not seasonally adjusted.

Table 2. Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Midwest (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015	Mar. 2014	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015
Expenditure category						
All Items	216.078	217.027	218.486	-1.5	1.1	0.7
All items (December 1977=100)	349.446	350.981	353.341			
Food and beverages	239.991	239.666	238.850	1.8	-0.5	-0.3
Food	239.768	239.385	238.516	1.9	-0.5	-0.4
Food at home	232.308	231.542	230.019	1.1	-1.0	-0.7
Food away from home	253.129	253.490	253.897	3.2	0.3	0.2
Alcoholic beverages	241.893	242.511	242.526	1.0	0.3	0.0
Housing	206.640	206.414	206.814	0.9	0.1	0.2
Shelter	236.119	236.406	237.080	2.3	0.4	0.3
Rent of primary residence [1]	245.595	246.060	246.588	2.8	0.4	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of residences [1] [2]	233.400	233.691	234.095	1.9	0.3	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence [1] [2]	233.407	233.700	234.105	1.9	0.3	0.2
Fuels and utilities	218.536	215.810	215.945	-3.7	-1.2	0.1
Household energy	183.411	180.209	180.066	-5.6	-1.8	-0.1
Energy services [1]	188.456	185.079	185.035	-5.1	-1.8	0.0
Electricity [1]	195.526	194.393	194.621	4.8	-0.5	0.1
Utility (piped) gas service [1]	168.633	160.916	160.335	-22.6	-4.9	-0.4
Household furnishings and operations	114.507	114.487	114.123	-1.9	-0.3	-0.3
Apparel	114.597	114.419	117.486	-2.1	2.5	2.7
Transportation	183.096	189.218	194.755	-11.8	6.4	2.9
Private transportation	179.522	185.670	191.345	-12.0	6.6	3.1
New and used motor vehicles [3]	97.498	98.217	99.651	0.0	2.2	1.5
New vehicles	142.641	143.328	144.103	1.5	1.0	0.5
Used cars and trucks	142.225	144.095	147.769	-1.7	3.9	2.5
Motor fuel	180.515	200.933	217.516	-32.8	20.5	8.3
Gasoline (all types)	178.650	199.303	215.927	-32.8	20.9	8.3
Gasoline, unleaded regular [4]	174.659	195.253	212.015	-33.4	21.4	8.6
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade [4] [5]	203.070	228.044	244.428	-31.2	20.4	7.2
Gasoline, unleaded premium [4]	190.409	208.996	224.112	-29.3	17.7	7.2
Medical Care	453.803	452.580	454.386	2.2	0.1	0.4
Medical care commodities	356.996	358.683	361.026	4.6	1.1	0.7
Medical care services	483.667	481.278	482.825	1.4	-0.2	0.3
Professional services	390.217	387.210	388.588	0.9	-0.4	0.4
Recreation [3]	114.132	114.057	114.502	0.5	0.3	0.4
Education and communication [3]	131.951	131.885	131.979	-0.2	0.0	0.1
Other goods and services	441.322	440.161	442.505	1.3	0.3	0.5
Commodity and Service Group						
All Items	216.078	217.027	218.486	-1.5	1.1	0.7
Commodities	176.612	178.621	180.817	-5.0	2.4	1.2
Commodities less food & beverages	146.162	149.165	152.648	-9.1	4.4	2.3
Nondurables less food & beverages	185.389	191.073	197.626	-13.7	6.6	3.4
Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel	229.357	238.547	247.230	-16.5	7.8	3.6
Durables	108.200	108.822	109.577	-1.0	1.3	0.7
Services	262.946	262.700	263.337	1.4	0.1	0.2
Rent of shelter [2]	234.435	234.724	235.417	2.3	0.4	0.3
Transportation services	289.670	290.358	290.842	3.4	0.4	0.2
Other services	302.686	302.749	303.328	0.9	0.2	0.2

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Midwest (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015	Mar. 2014	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015
Special aggregate indexes:						
All items less medical care	206.957	207.984	209.428	-1.7	1.2	0.7
All items less food	211.544	212.734	214.613	-2.1	1.5	0.9
All items less shelter	211.281	212.475	214.229	-2.9	1.4	0.8
Commodities less food	149.027	151.978	155.384	-8.8	4.3	2.2
Nondurables	212.646	215.436	218.437	-6.1	2.7	1.4
Nondurables less food	188.251	193.667	199.875	-12.9	6.2	3.2
Nondurables less food and apparel	228.820	237.257	245.184	-15.3	7.2	3.3
Services less rent of shelter [2]	269.714	268.890	269.402	0.6	-0.1	0.2
Services less medical care services	248.308	248.187	248.767	1.4	0.2	0.2
Energy	181.292	189.124	196.786	-21.9	8.5	4.1
All items less energy	222.101	222.207	222.911	1.4	0.4	0.3
All items less food and energy	218.751	218.960	219.996	1.3	0.6	0.5
Commodities less food and energy commodities	147.884	148.147	149.579	-0.4	1.1	1.0
Energy commodities	182.538	202.323	218.310	-32.4	19.6	7.9
Services less energy services	272.796	272.963	273.689	2.1	0.3	0.3

Footnotes
(1) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.
(2) Index is on a December 1984=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.
Regions defined as the four Census regions. Midwest includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.
NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date. Data not seasonally adjusted.