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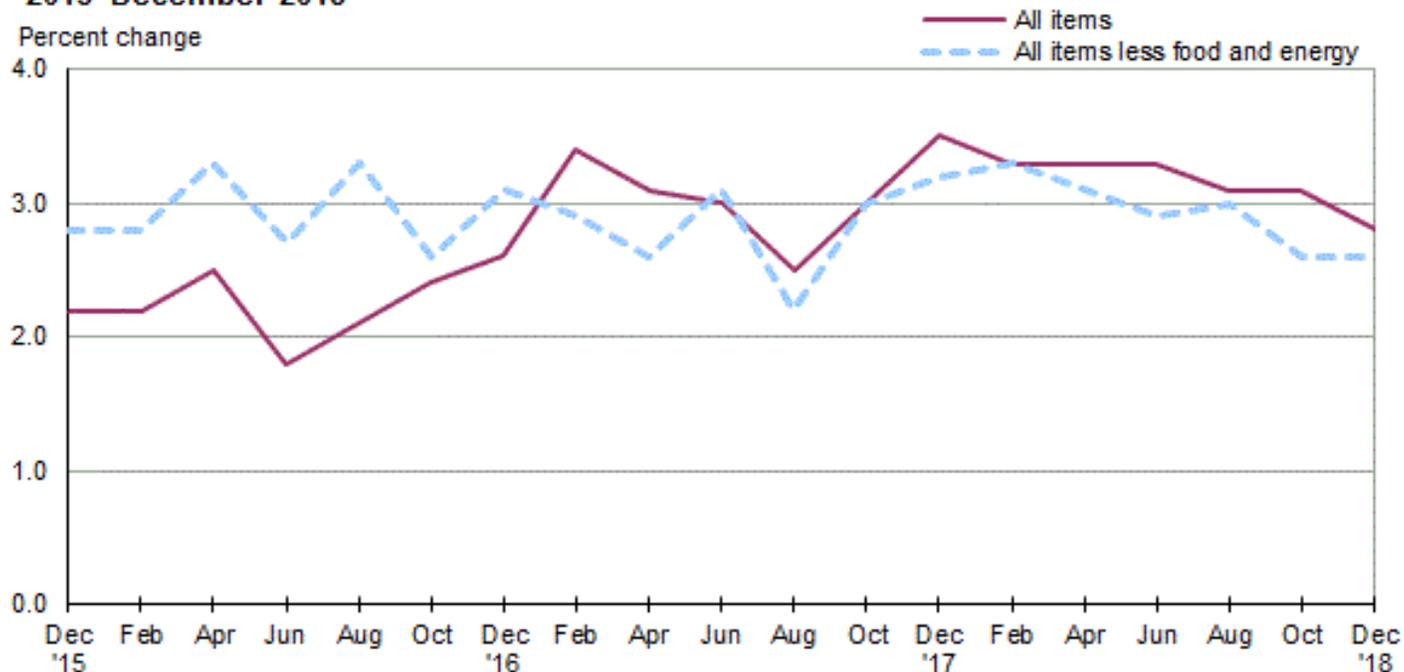
Consumer Price Index, Seattle area — December 2018

Area prices were up 0.2 percent over the past two months, up 2.8 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Seattle Area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), increased 0.2 percent for the two months ending in December 2018, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See [table A](#).) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the December increase was influenced by higher prices for shelter and education and communication. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U advanced 2.8 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) Energy prices advanced 5.5 percent, largely the result of an increase in the price of gasoline. The index for all items less food and energy rose 2.6 percent over the year. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA, December 2015–December 2018



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices rose 0.2 percent for the two months ending in December. (See [table 1](#).) Prices for food away from home moved up 0.3 percent, while prices for food at home were unchanged for the same period.

Over the year, food prices increased 2.7 percent. Prices for food away from home rose 3.1 percent since a year ago, and prices for food at home advanced 2.3 percent.

Energy

The energy index decreased 5.7 percent for the two months ending in December. The decrease was mainly due to lower prices for gasoline (-7.9 percent). Prices for natural gas service decreased 9.1 percent, while prices for electricity were unchanged for the same period.

Energy prices advanced 5.5 percent over the year, largely due to higher prices for gasoline (10.5 percent). Prices paid for natural gas service declined 8.8 percent, and prices for electricity decreased (-0.9 percent) during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy rose 0.6 percent in the latest two-month period. Higher prices for education and communication (3.6 percent), recreation (2.5 percent), and shelter (0.9 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for apparel (-4.1 percent) and household furnishings and operations (-1.0 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy rose 2.6 percent. Components contributing to the increase included shelter (5.0 percent) and education and communication (3.7 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were price declines in household furnishings and operations (-2.7 percent) and recreation (-0.8 percent).

Table A. Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue CPI-U bi-monthly and annual percent changes (not seasonally adjusted)

Month	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
	Bi-monthly	Annual										
February	0.8	1.8	0.7	1.2	0.2	1.1	0.2	2.2	1.0	3.4	0.8	3.3
April	0.4	1.2	1.6	2.4	0.9	0.4	1.1	2.5	0.8	3.1	0.8	3.3
June	0.8	1.4	0.4	2.0	1.6	1.6	0.9	1.8	0.8	3.0	0.8	3.3
August	0.0	1.1	-0.2	1.8	0.0	1.8	0.3	2.1	-0.2	2.5	-0.3	3.1
October	0.0	0.6	0.3	2.1	-0.3	1.2	0.0	2.4	0.5	3.0	0.4	3.1
December	-0.7	1.3	-1.1	1.7	-0.2	2.2	0.0	2.6	0.5	3.5	0.2	2.8

The February 2019 Consumer Price Index for the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue area is scheduled to be released on March 12, 2019

Consumer Price Index Geographic Revision for 2018

In January 2018, BLS introduced a new geographic area sample for the Consumer Price Index (CPI). As part of the new sample, the index for this area was renamed. Additional information on the geographic revision is available at: www.bls.gov/cpi/additional-resources/geographic-revision-2018.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 94 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 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/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 Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA. metropolitan area covered in this release is comprised of King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties in the State of Washington.

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

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Oct. 2018	Nov. 2018	Dec. 2018	Dec. 2017	Oct. 2018	Nov. 2018
Expenditure category						
All items	272.805	-	273.293	2.8	0.2	-
All items (1967=100)	831.614	-	833.105	-	-	-
Food and beverages	272.744	-	273.116	2.7	0.1	-
Food	275.292	-	275.713	2.7	0.2	-
Food at home	253.942	253.938	253.932	2.3	0.0	0.0
Cereals and bakery products	273.938	-	302.687	7.1	10.5	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	212.515	-	212.502	2.3	0.0	-
Dairy and related products	220.196	-	205.747	-5.2	-6.6	-
Fruits and vegetables	412.860	-	410.458	1.9	-0.6	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)	315.834	-	303.063	8.5	-4.0	-
Other food at home	214.714	-	214.358	1.0	-0.2	-
Food away from home	308.063	-	309.137	3.1	0.3	-
Food away from home	308.063	-	309.137	3.1	0.3	-
Alcoholic beverages	241.984	-	241.760	3.0	-0.1	-
Housing	319.636	-	321.618	3.9	0.6	-
Shelter	368.569	369.202	372.055	5.0	0.9	0.8
Rent of primary residence(2)	380.244	382.120	383.156	4.7	0.8	0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(2)(3)	389.370	390.636	391.998	5.5	0.7	0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(1)(2)	389.370	390.636	391.998	5.5	0.7	0.3
Fuels and utilities	267.131	-	264.206	0.2	-1.1	-
Household energy	239.706	236.808	235.353	-2.1	-1.8	-0.6
Energy services(2)	282.401	277.371	277.384	-2.4	-1.8	0.0
Electricity(2)	307.714	307.714	307.714	-0.9	0.0	0.0
Utility (piped) gas service(2)	161.212	146.575	146.613	-8.8	-9.1	0.0
Household furnishings and operations	173.114	-	171.317	-2.7	-1.0	-
Apparel	127.139	-	121.865	0.7	-4.1	-
Transportation	229.785	-	223.822	2.4	-2.6	-
Private transportation	240.942	-	235.753	4.0	-2.2	-
New and used motor vehicles(4)	100.097	-	100.934	2.3	0.8	-
New vehicles(1)	201.162	-	202.146	3.4	0.5	-
Used cars and trucks(1)	313.465	-	316.513	0.9	1.0	-
Motor fuel	385.119	380.953	354.841	10.5	-7.9	-6.9
Gasoline (all types)	393.037	388.730	361.987	10.5	-7.9	-6.9
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4)	427.158	422.272	392.648	10.6	-8.1	-7.0
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5)	309.367	306.274	287.144	10.7	-7.2	-6.2
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4)	358.558	355.550	333.418	10.1	-7.0	-6.2
Motor vehicle insurance(1)	584.118	-	584.118	0.3	0.0	-
Medical care	399.490	-	399.143	0.6	-0.1	-
Recreation(6)	95.557	-	97.984	-0.8	2.5	-
Education and communication(6)	135.029	-	139.893	3.7	3.6	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1) ..	1,558.301	-	1,575.893	9.4	1.1	-
Other goods and services	411.392	-	416.394	1.3	1.2	-
Commodity and service group						
All items	272.805	-	273.293	2.8	0.2	-
Commodities	194.346	-	192.960	2.1	-0.7	-
Commodities less food & beverages	155.950	-	153.927	1.6	-1.3	-
Nondurables less food & beverages	194.507	-	189.858	3.2	-2.4	-
Durables	118.265	-	118.523	-0.4	0.2	-
Services	345.951	-	348.288	3.2	0.7	-

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 Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Oct. 2018	Nov. 2018	Dec. 2018	Dec. 2017	Oct. 2018	Nov. 2018
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	267.131	-	267.661	3.0	0.2	-
All items less shelter.....	236.228	-	235.536	1.5	-0.3	-
Commodities less food	159.524	-	157.541	1.7	-1.2	-
Nondurables	232.140	-	229.770	2.9	-1.0	-
Nondurables less food.....	198.632	-	194.222	3.2	-2.2	-
Services less rent of shelter(3).....	326.853	-	327.783	0.7	0.3	-
Services less medical care services.....	338.880	-	341.309	3.4	0.7	-
Energy	320.658	317.045	302.294	5.5	-5.7	-4.7
All items less energy	273.144	-	274.604	2.6	0.5	-
All items less food and energy	273.038	-	274.672	2.6	0.6	-

Footnotes

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

(2) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(3) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

(6) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

- Data not available

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