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Western Information Office
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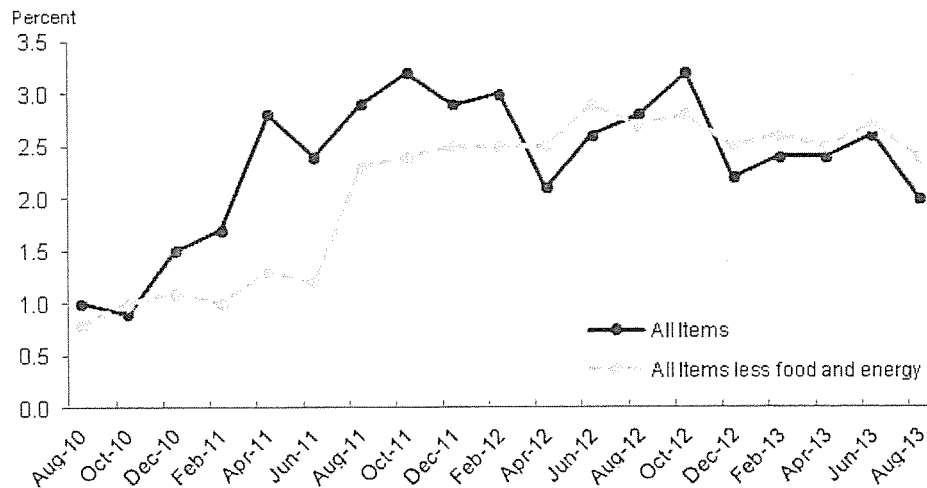
Consumer Price Index, San Francisco area – August 2013

Area prices were up 0.1 percent over the past two months, up 2.0 percent from a year ago

Prices in the greater San Francisco area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), edged up 0.1 percent for the two months ending August 2013, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See table A.) Regional Commissioner Richard J. Holden noted that the August increase was influenced by higher prices for shelter and recreation. (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 rose 2.0 percent. (See chart 1.) Energy prices decreased 3.6 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. The index for all items less food and energy rose 2.4 percent since August 2012.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, San Francisco, August 2010–August 2013



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices inched down 0.1 percent from June to August. (See table 1.) Prices for food at home decreased 0.3 percent, but prices for food away from home inched up 0.1 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices rose 2.4 percent. Prices for food at home increased 1.0 percent since a year ago, and prices for food away from home advanced 4.0 percent.

Energy

The energy index declined 2.8 percent for the two months ending in August 2013. The decrease was mainly due to lower prices for gasoline (-4.0 percent). Prices for natural gas service decreased 3.3 percent, but prices for electricity inched up 0.1 percent over the month.

Energy prices decreased 3.6 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-6.2 percent). Prices paid for natural gas service moved down 5.7 percent, but prices for electricity moved up 4.4 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.3 percent in the latest two-month period. Higher prices for recreation (1.7 percent), other goods and services (1.2 percent), and shelter (0.6 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for apparel (-4.7 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy rose 2.4 percent. Components contributing to the increase included medical care (3.9 percent) and shelter (3.7 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were price declines in recreation (-1.9 percent).

Table A. San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose CPI-U bi-monthly and annual percent changes (not seasonally adjusted)

Month	2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
	Bi-monthly	Annual	Bi-monthly	Annual	Bi-monthly	Annual	Bi-monthly	Annual	Bi-monthly	Annual	Bi-monthly	Annual
February	0.5	2.8	1.7	1.2	0.8	1.8	1.0	1.7	1.1	3.0	1.3	2.4
April	1.1	2.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.7	1.8	2.8	0.9	2.1	0.8	2.4
June	1.4	4.2	0.8	0.2	0.2	1.1	-0.2	2.4	0.3	2.6	0.5	2.6
August	0.1	4.2	0.0	0.2	-0.1	1.0	0.4	2.9	0.6	2.8	0.1	2.0
October	0.2	3.6	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.9	0.3	3.2	0.7	3.2		
December	-3.2	0.0	-0.8	2.6	-0.2	1.5	-0.4	2.9	-1.4	2.2		

CPI-W

In August, the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) was 242.903, down 0.1 percent from June. The CPI-W increased 1.9 percent over the year.

The October 2013 Consumer Price Index for the San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose is scheduled to be released on November 15, 2013, at 10:00 a.m. (PST).

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 88 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 29 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 4,000 housing units and approximately 26,000 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 San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA. metropolitan area covered in this release is comprised of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, San Benito, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Sonoma, and Solano Counties 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: 1-800-877-8339.

For personal assistance or further information on Consumer Price Indexes, as well as other Bureau products, contact the San Francisco Information Office at (415) 625-2270 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. PT.

[Please click here for a text formatted copy of the table issued with this release.](#)

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