

News

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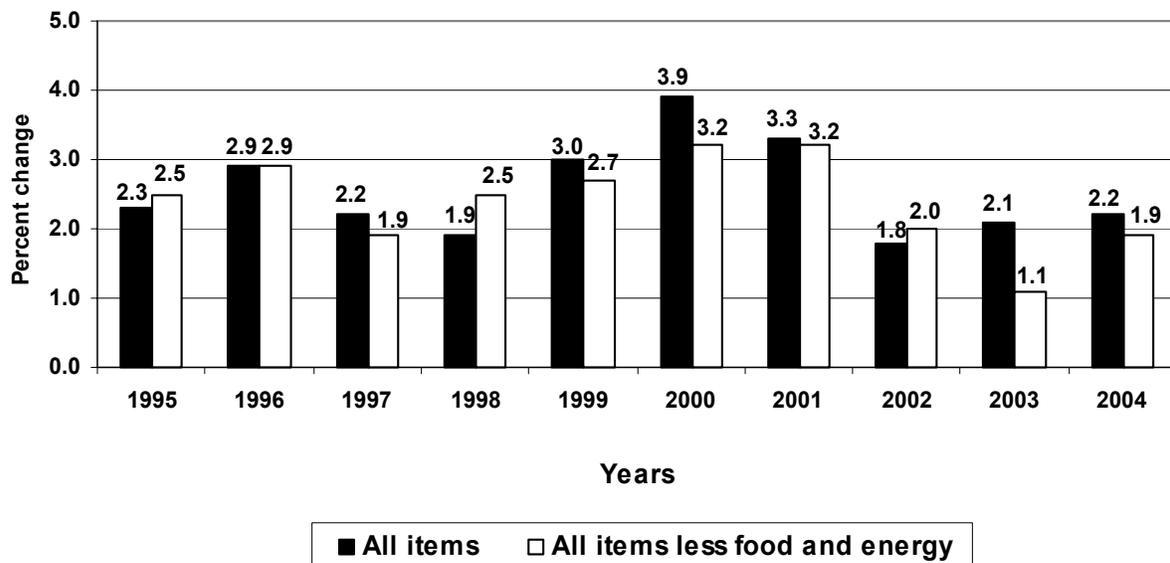
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FOR RELEASE:
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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR THE WEST – SEPTEMBER 2004

Consumer prices in the 13 westernmost states increased 2.2 percent from September 2003 through September 2004. This compared to a 2.0 percent increase for the year ending August 2004. Acting Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman said the September index rose 0.4 percent for the month, following a 0.1 percent gain from July to August. Housing prices, and to a lesser extent transportation and apparel prices, dominated the monthly advance in the index. The all items less food and energy index rose 1.9 percent over the year. Regional area Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) data are not seasonally adjusted.

**West Region, CPI-U Annual Percent Change
September 1995 to September 2004**



Housing, which makes up nearly 44 percent of the West CPI-U index, increased 0.4 percent over the month. This equaled the change for each of the past two months. Since September 2003, the housing index increased 2.4 percent, the highest annual change since an equivalent increase in October 2002. Shelter, the primary component of housing, increased 0.4 percent over the month and 2.7 percent over the year. Household fuels and utilities decreased 0.4 percent, the first decline in five months, but remained 3.1 percent higher over the year. Since August 2004, prices for utility (piped) gas service decreased 2.6 percent, while prices for electricity advanced 0.2 percent. Household furnishings and operations prices increased 0.3 percent in September, but inched down 0.1 percent over the year.

Transportation prices advanced 0.5 percent for the month and on an annual basis increased 1.5 percent. Since August 2004, used cars and trucks prices increased 2.0 percent and gasoline prices measured 0.9 percent higher.

Apparel represents less than four percent of the West Region CPI-U, yet in September contributed nearly as large an effect as transportation. For the month, apparel prices rose 2.2 percent and increased 1.2 percent for the year.

Three of the remaining major expenditure categories also rose in September. The education and communication index advanced 1.3 percent, recreation prices increased 0.2 percent, and other goods and services measured 0.3 percent higher. Over the year, the three indexes advanced 2.8, 0.5, and 1.9 percent, respectively.

Food and beverages prices showed no change from August to September. Over the year, prices were up 3.0 percent. Grocery prices, as represented by food at home index, declined 0.3 percent over the month, while the food away from home index increased 0.3 percent. Over the year, the grocery and food away from home indexes advanced 2.7 and 3.6 percent, respectively. Alcoholic beverages advanced 0.6 percent over the month and increased 2.1 percent over the year.

Medical care prices also did not change in September. Nevertheless, an annual increase of 3.6 percent was the highest advance of all major expenditure categories. Medical care services edged down 0.1 percent, while prices for medical care commodities moved 0.3 percent higher.

The All Items Consumer Price Index for All Consumers (CPI-U) for the West stands at 193.8 (1982-84=100) for September. This means a market basket of goods and services that cost \$100.00 in 1982-84 would have cost \$193.80 in September 2004.

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Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods

West (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from—		
	July 2004	Aug. 2004	Sep. 2004	Sep. 2003	July 2004	Aug. 2004
Expenditure category						
All items	192.9	193.0	193.8	2.2	0.5	0.4
All items (December 1977=100)	311.9	312.0	313.3	-	-	-
Food and beverages	193.1	193.1	193.1	3.0	.0	.0
Food	192.5	192.4	192.3	3.1	-1	-1
Food at home	198.0	197.2	196.6	2.7	-7	-3
Food away from home	184.6	185.4	186.0	3.6	.8	.3
Alcoholic beverages	200.1	199.8	201.0	2.1	.4	.6
Housing	198.7	199.5	200.2	2.4	.8	.4
Shelter	222.5	223.5	224.4	2.7	.9	.4
Rent of primary residence ¹	219.2	220.3	220.9	3.3	.8	.3
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence ^{1 2}	233.7	234.5	234.7	2.1	.4	.1
Fuels and utilities	179.9	182.0	181.2	3.1	.7	-.4
Fuels	167.4	169.8	168.4	2.2	.6	-.8
Gas (piped) and electricity ¹	170.4	172.8	171.5	2.0	.6	-.8
Electricity ¹	177.7	178.9	179.2	.0	.8	.2
Utility (piped) gas service ¹	172.7	177.6	172.9	6.5	.1	-2.6
Household furnishings and operations	128.6	128.2	128.6	-.1	.0	.3
Apparel	109.8	109.1	111.5	1.2	1.5	2.2
Transportation	167.0	165.6	166.5	1.5	-.3	.5
Private transportation	161.8	160.7	161.6	1.6	-.1	.6
New and used motor vehicles ³	93.3	93.4	94.1	-1.3	.9	.7
New vehicles	134.4	133.6	133.7	-1.3	-.5	.1
New cars and trucks ^{3 4}	93.4	92.8	92.9	-1.4	-.5	.1
New cars ⁴	131.6	131.0	131.0	-1.0	-.5	.0
Used cars and trucks	130.2	131.9	134.5	-2.0	3.3	2.0
Motor fuel	170.6	165.2	166.6	4.4	-2.3	.8
Gasoline (all types)	170.1	164.5	165.9	4.1	-2.5	.9
Gasoline, unleaded regular ⁴	168.2	162.6	164.2	4.4	-2.4	1.0
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade ^{4 5}	162.3	156.5	157.3	2.9	-3.1	.5
Gasoline, unleaded premium ⁴	165.8	161.0	161.7	3.5	-2.5	.4
Medical care	310.4	311.0	311.1	3.6	.2	.0
Medical care commodities	270.4	270.7	271.6	2.1	.4	.3
Medical care services	321.5	322.3	322.1	4.1	.2	-.1
Professional services	255.9	256.5	256.5	4.0	.2	.0
Recreation ³	106.1	105.6	105.8	.5	-.3	.2
Education and communication ³	110.6	111.8	113.2	2.8	2.4	1.3
Other goods and services	306.4	305.9	306.7	1.9	.1	.3
Commodity and service group						
All items	192.9	193.0	193.8	2.2	.5	.4
Commodities	155.5	154.6	155.3	1.2	-.1	.5
Commodities less food and beverages	134.3	133.1	134.0	-.1	-.2	.7
Nondurables less food and beverages	153.8	151.8	153.2	1.7	-.4	.9
Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel	185.6	182.7	183.5	1.7	-1.1	.4
Durables	114.7	114.2	114.7	-1.7	.0	.4
Services	226.7	227.8	228.6	2.9	.8	.4
Rent of shelter ²	236.3	237.4	238.3	2.7	.8	.4
Transportation services	223.6	223.4	223.7	2.5	.0	.1
Other services	255.6	257.5	259.9	3.5	1.7	.9

See footnotes at end of table.

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods-Continued

West (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from—		
	July 2004	Aug. 2004	Sep. 2004	Sep. 2003	July 2004	Aug. 2004
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	187.1	187.2	188.0	2.2	0.5	0.4
All items less food	193.1	193.3	194.2	2.0	.6	.5
All items less shelter	182.1	181.8	182.5	2.0	.2	.4
Commodities less food	137.1	135.8	136.8	.1	-.2	.7
Nondurables	174.1	173.0	173.8	2.4	-.2	.5
Nondurables less food	157.3	155.4	156.7	1.7	-.4	.8
Nondurables less food and apparel	186.4	183.8	184.6	1.8	-1.0	.4
Services less rent of shelter ²	239.4	240.6	241.4	3.2	.8	.3
Services less medical care services	219.3	220.4	221.3	2.8	.9	.4
Energy	170.9	168.6	168.9	3.7	-1.2	.2
All items less energy	196.4	196.8	197.6	2.1	.6	.4
All items less food and energy	197.7	198.1	199.1	1.9	.7	.5
Commodities less food and energy commodities	135.4	134.8	135.7	-.7	.2	.7
Energy commodities	172.2	166.9	168.2	4.4	-2.3	.8
Services less energy services	230.8	231.8	232.8	2.9	.9	.4

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.

- Data not available.

Regions defined as the four Census regions. See map in technical notes.

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