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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR TAMPA-ST. PETERSBURG-CLEARWATER FIRST HALF 2008

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, Florida, Metropolitan Statistical Area increased 2.3 percent in the first half of 2008, not seasonally adjusted, to a level of 189.884 (1987=100), the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that from the first half of 2007 through the first half of 2008, the all items index rose 3.8 percent.

Over the first half of the year, food costs rose 2.6 percent, while energy costs advanced 10.4 percent. Since the first half of 2007, costs for food have increased 6.2 percent, while energy costs rose 15.3 percent. Costs for all items less food and energy increased 1.3 percent in the first half of the year and rose 2.1 percent since the first half of 2007.

Table A. Percent changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater area, by expenditure category.
(not seasonally adjusted).

Expenditure category	Percent change from	
	1 st half 2007 to 1 st half 2008	2 nd half 2007 to 1 st half 2008
All items	3.8	2.3
Food and beverages	6.0	2.6
Housing	2.4	1.9
Apparel	7.3	5.2
Transportation	7.7	4.6
Medical care	1.7	0.3
Recreation 1/	-2.5	-2.8
Education and communication 1/	4.2	2.1
Other goods and services	2.3	1.3

1/ Index on a December 1997=100 base.

Among the major index groups, the index for housing rose 1.9 percent in the first half of the year, as shelter costs rose 2.2 percent. Costs for shelter includes rent of primary residence, lodging away from home, owners' equivalent rent of primary residence, and household insurance. Fuels and utilities costs advanced 1.8 percent since the second half of 2007, while the index for household furnishings and operations rose 0.5 percent. Since the first half of 2007, housing costs have risen 2.4 percent, reflecting a 2.7-percent rise in the cost of shelter and a 2.6-percent increase in the cost of fuels and utilities. Costs for household furnishings and operations increased 0.3 percent over the same time period.

The index for transportation rose 4.6 percent in the first half of 2008, as the cost of motor fuel jumped 18.8 percent. Since the first half of 2007, transportation costs rose 7.7 percent, reflecting a 29.2-percent rise in the cost of motor fuel.

The food and beverages index rose 2.6 percent in the first half of the year, as costs for food at home rose 2.9 percent and costs for food away from home advanced 2.8 percent. Alcoholic beverages' costs increased 2.8 percent over the same time period. Since the first half of 2007, the food and beverages index increased 6.0 percent. Over the year, prices for food at home increased 6.2 percent and food away from home costs advanced 6.3 percent. Costs for alcoholic beverages rose 4.0 percent over the year.

Apparel costs advanced 5.2 percent in the first half of 2008. Since the first half of 2007, the apparel index rose 7.3 percent.

Other major index groups include education and communication, which increased 2.1 percent in the first half of 2008. Since the first half of 2007, education and communication costs rose 4.2 percent. Costs for other goods and services rose 1.3 percent in the first half of the year and increased 2.3 percent since the first half of 2007. The medical care index edged up 0.3 percent in the first half of the year, 1.7 percent above the year ago level.

The remaining category, recreation, decreased 2.8 percent in the first half of the year. Over the year, recreation prices declined 2.5 percent.

The South and metropolitan areas in the Southeast

Semiannual averages are also produced for the South region. For the first half of 2008, costs for all items in the South rose 2.7 percent. Since the first half of 2007, costs have increased 4.7 percent. In Atlanta, costs increased 2.4 percent during the first half of the year and rose 4.4 percent since the first half of 2007. For Miami-Fort Lauderdale, costs increased 3.0 percent in the first half of 2008 and advanced 5.3 percent since the first half of 2007.

Technical Note

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has updated the consumption expenditure weights in the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) to the 2003-04 period. The updated expenditure weights for this index replace the 2001-02 weights which were introduced with the January 2004 CPI release. As originally announced by BLS in December 1998, CPI expenditure weights will continue to be updated at two-year intervals.

The CPI program completed its conversion to Computer Assisted Data Collection (CADDC). Due to the efficiencies gained from conversion to CADDC, BLS has extended data collection to cover the entire month, beginning with data for January 2004. CPI data collection is scheduled in terms of business days – weekdays excluding holidays. Formerly, data collection covered three pricing periods, each comprising six business days in most months and five days in November and December. Consequently, the last day of scheduled data collection was usually the 18th business day of the month. This allowed time during the end of the month for the mailing of paper schedules back to the Washington Office and the data entry of the information in these schedules. Starting in January 2004, the three pricing periods now have variable lengths, between six and eight business days long. The third pricing period normally will end on the last business day of the month.

Local area CPI indexes are by-products of the national CPI program. Because each local index is a small subset of the national index, it has a smaller sample size and is, therefore, subject to substantially more sampling and measurement error than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. The Bureau of Labor Statistics strongly urges users to consider adopting the national average CPI for use in escalator clauses.

We encourage users interested in learning more about changes to the CPI to contact the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Information on the Consumer Price Index and other surveys are available on our web site at www.bls.gov. Current and historical BLS data are also posted on our Internet page at www.bls.gov/ro4/home.htm. If you have additional questions, you can contact the Atlanta information office directly by dialing (404) 893-4222, and customers in the Miami area can reach us at (305) 358-2305. Information from the Consumer Price Index program is available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200, Federal Relay Services: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers and Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, Florida, (1987=100), not seasonally adjusted

Item and group	All Urban Consumers (CPI-U)			Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W)		
	Index	Percent change from		Index	Percent change from	
	1st half 2008	1st half 2007	2nd half 2007	1st half 2008	1st half 2007	2nd half 2007
All items	189.884	3.8	2.3	189.401	4.2	2.4
Food and beverages	186.391	6.0	2.6	188.056	6.1	2.6
Food	185.663	6.2	2.6	186.448	6.2	2.6
Food at home	185.002	6.2	2.9	186.553	6.2	2.9
Food away from home	187.915	6.3	2.8	188.026	6.2	2.7
Alcoholic beverages	183.987	4.0	2.8	189.943	4.3	3.3
Housing	187.381	2.4	1.9	187.047	2.5	1.7
Shelter	206.028	2.7	2.2	205.223	2.8	1.9
Rent of primary residence	201.250	3.8	1.6	201.250	3.8	1.6
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence	214.626	2.9	1.5	214.626	2.9	1.5
Fuels and utilities	188.469	2.6	1.8	185.215	2.7	1.8
Household energy	158.250	0.2	0.2	157.664	0.4	0.3
Gas (piped) and electricity	155.708	-0.3	-0.2	155.882	-0.1	0.0
Electricity	152.243	-0.3	-0.3	152.243	-0.3	-0.3
Utility (piped) gas service	282.823	-5.9	0.4	282.823	-5.9	0.4
Household furnishings and operations	122.207	0.3	0.5	117.090	0.3	0.1
Apparel	149.441	7.3	5.2	133.782	9.4	6.6
Transportation	184.444	7.7	4.6	192.868	7.9	4.9
Private transportation	188.524	7.7	4.7	196.147	8.0	4.9
Motor fuel	361.193	29.2	18.8	361.337	29.2	18.8
Gasoline (all types)	353.968	29.1	18.7	353.968	29.1	18.7
Gasoline, unleaded regular (1)	352.960	29.3	18.9	352.960	29.3	18.9
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade (1) (2)	306.533	29.0	18.7	306.533	29.0	18.7
Gasoline, unleaded premium (1)	343.140	27.9	17.7	343.140	27.9	17.7
Medical care	297.300	1.7	0.3	304.225	1.7	0.3
Recreation (3)	111.195	-2.5	-2.8	108.642	-3.3	-3.2
Education and communication (3)	109.467	4.2	2.1	112.621	4.9	2.4
Other goods and services	231.347	2.3	1.3	235.146	2.2	0.9
Commodities	163.676	6.1	3.3	167.944	6.6	3.7
Services	213.709	2.3	1.6	210.270	2.3	1.4
All items less shelter	183.611	4.5	2.3	183.869	4.9	2.7
All items less medical care	183.733	4.0	2.4	184.148	4.3	2.5
Energy	237.196	15.3	10.4	242.173	15.6	10.6
All items less energy	185.475	2.7	1.5	183.539	2.9	1.5
All items less food and energy	185.642	2.1	1.3	183.165	2.3	1.3

Footnotes

- (1) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
- (2) Index is on a December 1993=100 base.
- (3) Index is on a December 1997=100 base.