

# News

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## **CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES FOR THE SEATTLE AREA: FEBRUARY 2009**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported consumer prices in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton area increased 1.0 percent for the two months ending February 2009. Regional Commissioner Richard J. Holden said that the increase in the all items index was mainly due to higher prices for transportation. From February 2008 to February 2009, overall prices advanced 1.4 percent and the all items less food and energy index rose 2.7 percent. Local Consumer Price Index (CPI) data are not seasonally adjusted.

The transportation index rose 2.5 percent during the past two months, primarily due to an 18.9 percent jump in gasoline prices. Over the year, the transportation index declined 7.0 percent and gasoline prices dropped 31.2 percent.

The housing index rose 0.5 percent for the two months ending February 2009, and compared to a year ago, was 3.8 percent higher. Shelter, the primary component of housing, increased 0.9 percent over the past two months and was up 4.7 percent over the past year. Within the shelter category, the rent of primary residence index was unchanged from December to February, yet rose 5.5 percent over the year. The owners' equivalent rent of primary residence increased 0.5 percent since December and advanced 6.5 percent since February 2008. Shelter also includes lodging away from home, an unpublished subcategory. Household energy, another component of housing, decreased 1.0 percent during the past two months, but was 1.8 percent higher over the past 12 months. Within the household energy index, prices for both electricity and utility (piped) gas services declined 0.4 percent over the past two months. Compared to February 2008, prices for electricity moved down 0.4 percent, while prices for utility (piped) gas service rose 15.0 percent. Prices for household furnishings and operations decreased 2.5 percent over the past two months and 2.8 percent over the past year.

The food and beverages index increased 0.7 percent from December to February and 5.3 percent over the year. Grocery prices, as measured by the food at home index, moved up 0.8 percent over the past two months and were 7.3 percent higher than a year ago. Food away from home prices rose 0.4 percent from December to February and advanced 3.4 percent for the latest 12-month period.

Medical care prices increased 1.9 percent for the two months ending in February, but declined 0.2 percent over the year.

Apparel prices increased 6.9 percent for the latest two-month period, but were 2.3 percent lower over the past year.

Among the remaining major expenditure categories, prices for education and communication edged up 0.1 percent, but prices for recreation moved down 0.8 percent for the latest two-month period. Over the past year, education and communication prices advanced 4.1 percent and recreation prices rose 0.9 percent. The other goods and services index decreased 1.5 percent from December to February, but rose 1.0 percent over the latest 12-month period.

The All Items, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area measured 224.737 (1982-84=100). This means a market basket of goods and services that cost \$100.00 in 1982-84 would have cost \$224.74 in February 2009.

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

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

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from—		
	Dec. 2008	Jan. 2009	Feb. 2009	Feb. 2008	Dec. 2008	Jan. 2009
<b>Expenditure category</b>						
All items .....	222.580	-	224.737	1.4	1.0	-
All items (1967=100) .....	678.511	-	685.085	-	-	-
Food and beverages .....	231.378	-	233.051	5.3	.7	-
Food .....	233.553	-	234.926	5.5	.6	-
Food at home .....	233.406	236.850	235.199	7.3	.8	-0.7
Food away from home .....	236.844	-	237.724	3.4	.4	-
Alcoholic beverages .....	210.405	-	214.715	3.0	2.0	-
Housing .....	240.195	-	241.444	3.8	.5	-
Shelter .....	265.504	267.324	267.854	4.7	.9	.2
Rent of primary residence <sup>1</sup> .....	259.935	260.566	260.003	5.5	.0	-2
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence <sup>1 2</sup> .....	281.374	282.653	282.657	6.5	.5	.0
Fuels and utilities .....	203.993	-	205.631	3.7	.8	-
Household energy .....	205.644	204.149	203.648	1.8	-1.0	-2
Gas (piped) and electricity <sup>1</sup> .....	241.705	241.472	240.819	3.4	-4	-3
Electricity <sup>1</sup> .....	232.210	231.902	231.390	-4	-4	-2
Utility (piped) gas service <sup>1</sup> .....	223.718	223.718	222.818	15.0	-4	-4
Household furnishings and operations .....	181.714	-	177.145	-2.8	-2.5	-
Apparel .....	124.606	-	133.250	-2.3	6.9	-
Transportation .....	184.105	-	188.750	-7.0	2.5	-
Private transportation .....	188.975	-	194.061	-8.0	2.7	-
Motor fuel .....	198.077	218.171	232.697	-31.2	17.5	6.7
Gasoline (all types) .....	198.895	220.329	236.572	-31.2	18.9	7.4
Gasoline, unleaded regular <sup>3</sup> .....	216.594	240.589	258.678	-31.6	19.4	7.5
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade <sup>3 4</sup> .....	156.914	172.653	184.799	-29.8	17.8	7.0
Gasoline, unleaded premium <sup>3</sup> .....	184.572	201.195	214.239	-29.6	16.1	6.5
Medical care .....	335.173	-	341.494	-2	1.9	-
Recreation <sup>5</sup> .....	98.667	-	97.907	.9	-8	-
Education and communication <sup>5</sup> .....	125.840	-	126.026	4.1	.1	-
Other goods and services .....	363.742	-	358.258	1.0	-1.5	-
<b>Commodity and service group</b>						
All items .....	222.580	-	224.737	1.4	1.0	-
Commodities .....	176.118	-	178.495	-3.7	1.3	-
Commodities less food and beverages .....	148.327	-	150.950	-8.8	1.8	-
Nondurables less food and beverages .....	162.580	-	170.680	-14.2	5.0	-
Durables .....	132.077	-	130.082	-2.0	-1.5	-
Services .....	265.739	-	267.717	4.6	.7	-
<b>Special aggregate indexes</b>						
All items less medical care .....	217.429	-	219.410	1.5	.9	-
All items less shelter .....	206.264	-	208.361	-5	1.0	-
Commodities less food .....	150.748	-	153.438	-8.2	1.8	-
Nondurables .....	195.817	-	200.824	-4.3	2.6	-
Nondurables less food .....	166.234	-	173.983	-12.7	4.7	-
Services less rent of shelter <sup>2</sup> .....	272.240	-	273.706	4.3	.5	-
Services less medical care services .....	258.565	-	260.225	4.6	.6	-
Energy .....	204.427	214.322	221.757	-19.6	8.5	3.5
All items less energy .....	226.498	-	227.662	3.1	.5	-
All items less food and energy .....	225.449	-	226.580	2.7	.5	-

<sup>1</sup> This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

<sup>2</sup> Index is on a November 1982=100 base.

<sup>3</sup> Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

<sup>4</sup> Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

<sup>5</sup> Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

- Data not available.

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