



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
Cheryl Abbot, Regional Economist
(972) 850-4800
<http://www.bls.gov/ro6/home.htm>

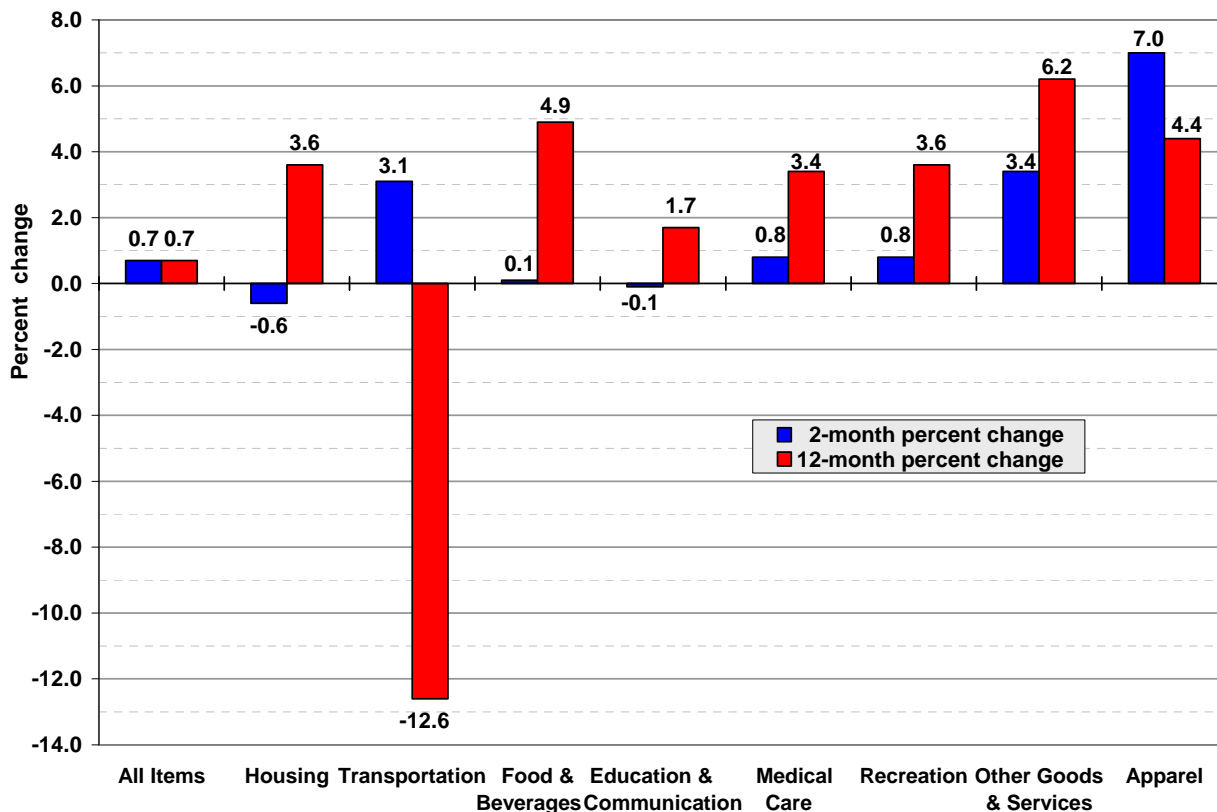
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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR DALLAS-FORT WORTH: MARCH 2009

Area Prices Register First Increase Since Summer 2008

Prices in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area rose 0.7 percent during February and March, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that this was the first two-month increase since June and July 2008. The latest advance was primarily the result of higher transportation costs, although increased apparel and tobacco prices were also large contributors. During the year ended in March 2009, total prices rose 0.7 percent. These data are based on the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U).

2-Month and 12-Month Percent Change Ended March 2009
CPI-U by Major Category for Dallas-Fort Worth



Dallas-Fort Worth Consumer Price Index – March 2009 (Continued)

The transportation index registered its first increase since June and July 2008, rising 3.1 percent in February and March. The biggest factor in the increase was higher gasoline costs which advanced 11.1 percent during the period. The average price for a gallon of gasoline in the Dallas-Fort Worth area stood at \$1.849 in March. Higher prices for motor vehicle repair also contributed to the bimonthly gain, while declines were registered in used car prices and airline fares. Despite the recent rise in gasoline costs, prices were 41.6 percent below a year ago and were the primary cause of the 12.6-percent annual decline in total transportation costs.

Apparel prices increased 7.0 percent in February and March, the biggest two-month increase since August and September 2007. Sharp price advances often occur at this time of year as new spring and summer lines are introduced. Higher prices were noted for many clothing items including women's suits and separates, girls' apparel, boys' apparel, men's shirts and sweaters, and footwear. During the 12 months ended in March 2009 the apparel index rose 4.4 percent.

The cost of other goods and services increased 3.4 percent in February and March, the sharpest rise since the two months ended in January 2007. The current increase was largely the result of sharply higher prices for cigarettes, although increases were also noted for personal care services. During the last 12 months, the cost of other goods and services advanced 6.2 percent, the fastest annual rate of gain among the major categories.

The indexes for both medical care and recreation rose 0.8 percent in February and March. Higher prices for prescription drugs and dental care were factors in the medical care advance while increases for sporting goods led the recreation advance. Over the year the cost of medical care was up 3.4 percent and recreation costs rose 3.6 percent.

Offsetting some of the other bimonthly increases, the housing index registered a 0.6-percent decline in February and March as a result of lower costs for household energy. Charges for utility (piped) gas service dropped 28.0 percent during the period and electricity prices fell 3.5 percent. The cost of household furnishings and operations rose 1.8 percent while the shelter index was unchanged during the two-month period. During the last 12 months, total housing costs rose 3.6 percent led by a 4.2-percent increase in shelter costs.

Price movements were minimal in the two remaining categories in February and March. The education and communication index slipped 0.1 percent, due in part to lower prices for long distance land-line telephone services, while food and beverages costs edged up 0.1 percent. Higher charges for alcoholic beverages and food away from home (restaurant meals) were nearly balanced by a 0.6-percent decline in prices for food at home (grocery items). On an annual basis, the food and beverages index increased 4.9 percent and costs for education and communication rose 1.7 percent.

The CPI-U for the Dallas-Fort Worth area stood at 200.039 on the 1982-84=100 reference base, meaning that a market basket of goods and services which averaged \$100.00 in 1982-84 would have cost local consumers \$200.04 in March 2009.

Dallas-Fort Worth Consumer Price Index – March 2009 (Continued)

The Dallas-Fort Worth Consolidated Metropolitan Area (CMSA) includes Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Henderson, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, and Tarrant Counties. Local area CPI indexes are by-products of the national CPI program. Because each local area index is a small subset of the national index, the sample size is smaller and therefore 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.

Next Release Date: The Dallas-Fort Worth April CPI for Energy, Food At Home, and Shelter will be released on May 15, 2009.