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

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater area increased 0.3 percent in the second half of 2008, not seasonally adjusted, to a level of 190.388 (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 second half of 2007 through the second half of 2008, the all items index rose 2.5 percent.

Over the second half of the year, food costs rose 3.4 percent, while energy costs declined 4.5 percent. Since the second half of 2007, costs for food have increased 6.1 percent, while energy costs rose 5.4 percent. Costs for all items less food and energy increased 0.3 percent in the second half of the year and rose 1.6 percent since the second 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	
	2 nd half 2007 to 2 nd half 2008	1 st half 2008 to 2 nd half 2008
All items	2.5	0.3
Food and beverages	6.2	3.5
Housing	2.4	0.4
Apparel	1.8	-3.3
Transportation	1.1	-3.3
Medical care	-0.5	-0.8
Recreation 1/	-2.8	0.0
Education and communication 1/	8.1	5.9
Other goods and services	2.3	1.0

1/ Index on a December 1997=100 base.

Among the major index groups, the food and beverages index rose 3.5 percent in the second half of the year, as costs for food at home rose 3.6 percent and costs for food away from home advanced 2.7 percent. Alcoholic beverages' costs increased 3.9 percent over the same time period. Since the second half of 2007, the food and beverages index increased 6.2 percent. The 12-month increase in food and beverages was the largest advance in the history of the index. Over the year, prices for food at home increased 6.6 percent and costs for food away from home advanced 5.5 percent. Costs for alcoholic beverages rose 6.9 percent over the year.

Education and communication costs advanced 5.9 percent in the second half of 2008. Since the second half of 2007, the education and communication index rose 8.1 percent. The recent advances in the education and communication index were the largest increases since the index began in 1998.

The index for housing rose 0.4 percent in the second half of the year, as fuel and utilities costs rose 2.9 percent. The household furnishing and operations index increased 0.8 percent since the first half of 2008. Costs for shelter which includes rent of primary residence, lodging away from home, owners' equivalent rent of primary residence, and household insurance was unchanged. Since the second half of 2007, housing costs have risen 2.4 percent, reflecting a 2.2-percent rise in the cost of shelter and a 4.7-percent increase in the cost of fuels and utilities. The index for household furnishings and operations increased 1.2 percent over the same time period.

Over the second half of 2008, costs for other goods and services (which includes tobacco and smoking products, personal care products and services, and miscellaneous personal goods) increased 1.0 percent. Over the year, the other goods and services index advanced 2.3 percent.

The index for transportation declined 3.3 percent in the second half of 2008, as the cost of motor fuel decreased 8.7 percent. The second half decrease in the transportation index was the largest decline since semi-annual reporting began in 1998. Over the year, transportation costs rose 1.1 percent, reflecting an 8.4-percent rise in the cost of motor fuel.

Other major index groups include apparel costs, which decreased 3.3 percent in the second half of 2008. Since the second half of 2007, apparel costs rose 1.8 percent. The medical care index declined 0.8 percent in the second half of the year and decreased 0.5 percent since the second half of 2007; the largest 12-month decline since the first half of 1999.

The remaining category, recreation was unchanged in the second half of the year. Over the year, recreation prices declined 2.8 percent.

The South and metropolitan areas in the Southeast

Semi-annual averages are also produced for the South region. For the second half of 2008, costs for all items in the South rose 0.9 percent. Since the second half of 2007, costs have increased 3.6 percent. In Atlanta, costs decreased 0.3 percent during the second half of the year and rose 2.1 percent since the second half of 2007. For Miami-Fort Lauderdale, costs increased 0.8 percent in the second half of 2008 and advanced 3.8 percent since the second 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) and Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) to the 2005-06 period. The updated expenditure weights for these indexes replace the 2003-2004 weights which were introduced effective with the January 2006 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 (CADC). Due to the efficiencies gained from conversion to CADC, 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 Web site 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. 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	
	2nd half 2008	2nd half 2007	1st half 2008	2nd half 2008	2nd half 2007	1st half 2008
All items	190.388	2.5	0.3	189.767	2.6	0.2
Food and beverages	192.890	6.2	3.5	194.467	6.1	3.4
Food	192.064	6.1	3.4	192.920	6.2	3.5
Food at home	191.612	6.6	3.6	193.234	6.6	3.6
Food away from home	192.911	5.5	2.7	193.369	5.6	2.8
Alcoholic beverages	191.223	6.9	3.9	194.670	5.8	2.5
Housing	188.176	2.4	0.4	188.625	2.6	0.8
Shelter	206.056	2.2	0.0	206.120	2.3	0.4
Rent of primary residence	202.601	2.3	0.7	202.601	2.3	0.7
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence (1)	216.904	2.6	1.1	216.904	2.6	1.1
Fuels and utilities	193.920	4.7	2.9	191.394	5.2	3.3
Household energy	161.418	2.2	2.0	161.887	3.0	2.7
Gas (piped) and electricity	158.943	1.9	2.1	160.058	2.7	2.7
Electricity	154.856	1.4	1.7	154.856	1.4	1.7
Utility (piped) gas service	304.789	8.2	7.8	304.789	8.2	7.8
Household furnishings and operations	123.138	1.2	0.8	118.201	1.0	0.9
Apparel	144.562	1.8	-3.3	129.067	2.8	-3.5
Transportation	178.285	1.1	-3.3	185.446	0.8	-3.8
Private transportation	181.239	0.6	-3.9	187.971	0.6	-4.2
Motor fuel	329.763	8.4	-8.7	330.104	8.5	-8.6
Gasoline (all types)	322.695	8.2	-8.8	322.695	8.2	-8.8
Gasoline, unleaded regular (1)	321.986	8.5	-8.8	321.986	8.5	-8.8
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade (1) (2)	278.830	8.0	-9.0	278.830	8.0	-9.0
Gasoline, unleaded premium (1)	313.427	7.5	-8.7	313.427	7.5	-8.7
Medical care	294.936	-0.5	-0.8	303.136	-0.1	-0.4
Recreation (3)	111.166	-2.8	0.0	108.343	-3.5	-0.3
Education and communication (3)	115.953	8.1	5.9	117.576	6.9	4.4
Other goods and services	233.708	2.3	1.0	238.237	2.2	1.3
Commodities	162.138	2.3	-0.9	166.249	2.6	-1.0
Services	216.026	2.7	1.1	212.746	2.6	1.2
All items less shelter	184.322	2.7	0.4	183.978	2.7	0.1
All items less medical care	184.345	2.7	0.3	184.554	2.7	0.2
Energy	226.506	5.4	-4.5	232.109	6.0	-4.2
All items less energy	186.881	2.3	0.8	184.852	2.2	0.7
All items less food and energy	186.233	1.6	0.3	183.500	1.5	0.2

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.