

# News

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**FOR RELEASE:**

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**CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR THE LOS ANGELES AREA, MARCH 2009**  
**Prices Declined 1.0 Percent During the Past Twelve Months**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today that the All Items Consumer Price Index (CPI) in the Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA area did not change in March, following a 0.3 percent increase for February. For the year ending March 2009, overall prices decreased 1.0 percent largely due to falling household energy and motor fuel prices. Regional Commissioner Richard J. Holden noted that the special aggregate index for energy decreased 31.2 percent since March 2008. During this same period the special index for all items less food and energy increased 1.6 percent. Local Consumer Price Index data are not seasonally adjusted.

Transportation prices in the Los Angeles area edged up 0.1 percent in March, but gasoline prices declined 1.8 percent. Between March 2008 and March 2009, transportation prices decreased 12.8 percent, dominated by a drop of 38.2 percent in gasoline prices. The transportation index comprises about 16 percent of the Los Angeles CPI all items index.

The Los Angeles area's food and beverages index declined 0.5 percent in March. Over the past 12 months, prices for food and beverages rose 3.2 percent. The food at home index, which measures grocery prices, decreased 0.5 percent in March, but increased 3.5 percent from a year ago. Food away from home prices declined 0.7 percent for the month, but advanced 3.0 percent for the year. Prices for alcoholic beverages increased 0.6 percent and 1.8 percent over the past month and year, respectively.

The housing index, which accounts for about 47 percent of the Los Angeles area's all items index, did not change in March, yet advanced 0.9 percent compared to 12 months ago. Shelter prices also showed no change in March, yet increased 1.8 percent for the year. Household fuels and utilities decreased 0.8 percent for the month and 9.1 percent since March 2008. Within household fuels and utilities, prices for utility (piped) gas service declined 4.0 percent, while electricity prices were unchanged for the month. Since March 2008, the utility (piped) gas service index fell 37.5 percent and the electricity index declined 3.7 percent. Prices for household furnishings and operations increased 0.5 percent in March and increased 1.0 percent from a year ago.

Apparel prices increased 0.5 percent in March and rose 3.5 percent in the past 12 months. In March 2008, medical care prices increased 0.3 percent for the month and 2.8 percent for the year.

Education and communication prices declined 0.4 percent in March, but advanced 3.7 percent in the past 12 months.

In the Los Angeles area, recreation prices declined 0.5 in March, yet advanced 0.4 percent for the year. The other goods and services index increased 1.3 percent for the month and 3.9 percent from one year ago.

The All Items Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area, stands at 221.376 (1982-84=100). This means a market basket of goods and services that cost \$100.00 in 1982-84 would have cost \$221.38.

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

Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from—		
	Jan. 2009	Feb. 2009	Mar. 2009	Mar. 2008	Jan. 2009	Feb. 2009
<b>Expenditure category</b>						
All items .....	220.719	221.439	221.376	-1.0	0.3	0.0
All items (1967=100) .....	652.101	654.229	654.042	-	-	-
Food and beverages .....	223.939	224.931	223.791	3.2	-.1	-.5
Food .....	222.992	224.098	222.793	3.3	-.1	-.6
Food at home .....	236.034	236.209	235.063	3.5	-.4	-.5
Food away from home .....	204.318	206.391	204.946	3.0	.3	-.7
Alcoholic beverages .....	224.181	223.382	224.812	1.8	.3	.6
Housing .....	244.895	244.507	244.542	.9	-.1	.0
Shelter .....	275.737	276.279	276.356	1.8	.2	.0
Rent of primary residence <sup>1</sup> .....	281.000	281.005	280.723	3.2	-.1	-.1
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence <sup>1 2</sup> .....	288.806	289.402	289.547	2.7	.3	.1
Fuels and utilities .....	232.931	226.594	224.697	-9.1	-3.5	-.8
Household energy .....	224.949	215.658	213.007	-15.4	-5.3	-1.2
Gas (piped) and electricity <sup>1</sup> .....	223.989	214.503	212.297	-15.1	-5.2	-1.0
Electricity <sup>1</sup> .....	253.749	253.633	253.595	-3.7	-.1	.0
Utility (piped) gas service <sup>1</sup> .....	194.074	165.709	159.133	-37.5	-18.0	-4.0
Household furnishings and operations .....	128.133	126.571	127.245	1.0	-.7	.5
Apparel .....	105.026	110.269	110.805	3.5	5.5	.5
Transportation .....	167.041	168.235	168.353	-12.8	.8	.1
Private transportation .....	161.240	162.940	162.939	-12.9	1.1	.0
Motor fuel .....	156.258	174.020	170.687	-38.4	9.2	-1.9
Gasoline (all types) .....	152.387	170.420	167.342	-38.2	9.8	-1.8
Gasoline, unleaded regular <sup>3</sup> .....	150.923	169.472	166.499	-38.7	10.3	-1.8
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade <sup>3 4</sup> .....	145.717	162.360	159.013	-37.9	9.1	-2.1
Gasoline, unleaded premium <sup>3</sup> .....	149.745	165.764	162.951	-37.0	8.8	-1.7
Medical care .....	358.117	360.070	361.064	2.8	.8	.3
Recreation <sup>5</sup> .....	115.511	115.517	114.942	.4	-.5	-.5
Education and communication <sup>5</sup> .....	128.826	129.061	128.589	3.7	-.2	-.4
Other goods and services .....	344.385	346.256	350.681	3.9	1.8	1.3
<b>Commodity and service group</b>						
All items .....	220.719	221.439	221.376	-1.0	.3	.0
Commodities .....	162.159	163.536	163.463	-4.7	.8	.0
Commodities less food and beverages .....	129.876	131.296	131.601	-8.8	1.3	.2
Nondurables less food and beverages .....	153.282	160.377	160.646	-14.0	4.8	.2
Durables .....	104.392	101.708	102.017	-2.3	-2.3	.3
Services .....	272.368	272.420	272.367	1.3	.0	.0
<b>Special aggregate indexes</b>						
All items less medical care .....	214.258	214.935	214.842	-1.2	.3	.0
All items less shelter .....	196.609	197.413	197.286	-2.7	.3	-.1
Commodities less food .....	133.821	135.214	135.548	-8.5	1.3	.2
Nondurables .....	188.732	193.190	192.821	-5.7	2.2	-.2
Nondurables less food .....	158.886	165.698	166.028	-13.1	4.5	.2
Services less rent of shelter <sup>2</sup> .....	274.740	274.017	273.759	.5	-.4	-.1
Services less medical care services .....	264.683	264.642	264.566	1.2	.0	.0
Energy .....	180.041	188.827	185.706	-31.2	3.1	-1.7
All items less energy .....	225.711	225.818	225.989	1.8	.1	.1
All items less food and energy .....	226.702	226.645	227.058	1.6	.2	.2

<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 December 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.