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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR ATLANTA—AUGUST 2008

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Atlanta decreased 0.3 percent over the two months ending in August to a level of 211.404 (1982-84=100), not seasonally adjusted, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that lower costs for transportation and housing were partially offset by an increase in costs for apparel, food and beverages, medical care, and education and communication. For the 12 months ending in August 2008, the CPI-U for Atlanta was up 5.0 percent.

Over the two months, food costs increased 1.2 percent, while energy costs decreased 5.4 percent. Excluding food and energy, the CPI-U for Atlanta increased 0.5 percent in the July-August pricing period. Since August 2007, food costs in the Atlanta area rose 5.5 percent and energy costs jumped 26.2 percent. Excluding food and energy costs, the CPI-U for Atlanta increased 1.8 percent over the year.

Table A. Percent changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for Atlanta by expenditure category (not seasonally adjusted).

Expenditure category	Percentage change	
	Over 12 months since August 2007	Over 2 months since June 2008
All items	5.0	-0.3
Food and beverages	5.3	1.1
Housing	3.5	-0.5
Apparel	11.0	6.5
Transportation	12.5	-3.0
Medical care	1.8	1.5
Recreation 1/	-1.9	-0.3
Education and communication 1/	2.7	1.1
Other goods and services	1.8	-0.6

1/ Index on a December 1997=100 base.

Among the major index groups, the transportation index declined 3.0 percent during the July-August pricing period, compared to an 8.6-percent increase in the previous two-month period. The index increased 12.5 percent over the 12 months, as motor fuel prices advanced 36.8 percent.

The housing index declined 0.5 percent in the July-August pricing period. The index for fuels and utilities decreased 2.2 percent over the two months, as costs for utility (piped) gas service declined 11.8 percent and electricity costs increased 0.4 percent. The shelter index, which measures changes in the cost for rent of primary residence, lodging away from home, owners' equivalent rent of primary

residence, and tenants' and household insurance, decreased 0.5 percent. Costs for household furnishings and operations moved up 2.1 percent in the two-month pricing period. Over the past year, housing costs rose 3.5 percent, as costs for fuels and utilities advanced 14.3 percent. The shelter index and costs for household furnishings and operations increased 1.6 and 4.1 percent, respectively.

During the July-August pricing period, the other goods and services index (which includes tobacco and smoking products, personal care products and services, and miscellaneous personal goods) declined 0.6 percent, as the recreation index moved down 0.3 percent. Over the year, the other goods and services index increased 1.8 percent, while the recreation index decreased 1.9 percent.

The four remaining categories increased over the two month pricing period. The apparel index advanced 6.5 percent over the two months, increasing 11.0 percent since August 2007.

The index for food and beverages in the Atlanta area increased 1.1 percent in the July-August pricing period. Over the two months, costs for food at home rose 1.4 percent as costs for food away from home increased 1.0 percent. The index measuring alcoholic beverages inched down 0.1 percent over the same period. Since August of 2007, the food and beverages index rose 5.3 percent, as costs for food at home advanced 7.2 percent and food away from home costs increased 3.8 percent. The alcoholic beverages index rose 1.2 percent over the year.

Over the two months, the medical care index increased 1.5 percent, as the education and communication index increased 1.1 percent. Over the year, the medical care index rose 1.8 percent, while the education and communication index advanced 2.7 percent.

Consumer Price Index for the South and Miami-Fort Lauderdale

Consumer price indexes are published for the Miami-Fort Lauderdale area and the South (which includes the Atlanta and Miami-Fort Lauderdale areas). For the two months ending in August, consumer prices were unchanged in the South and edged up 0.2 percent in the Miami-Fort Lauderdale area. Over the past 12 months, the all items index for the South rose 5.6 percent, while the Miami-Fort Lauderdale index increased 5.8 percent.

Technical Notes

The Consumer Price Index for Atlanta is published bi-monthly. Prior to 1998, Atlanta data were available for only the first and second halves of the year and as an annual average. 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 2001-2002 weights that 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 has 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 on 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, Atlanta, Georgia, (1982-84=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	
	Aug. 2008	Aug. 2007	Jun. 2008	Aug. 2008	Aug. 2007	Jun. 2008
All items	211.404	5.0	-0.3	211.113	5.5	-0.4
All items (1967 = 100)	637.531	-	-	638.329	-	-
Food and beverages	219.310	5.3	1.1	216.077	5.0	1.1
Food	228.165	5.5	1.2	223.008	5.2	1.1
Food at home	221.986	7.2	1.4	214.390	6.9	1.5
Food away from home	239.040	3.8	1.0	238.621	3.3	0.7
Alcoholic beverages	140.181	1.2	-0.1	138.891	1.3	-0.1
Housing	207.020	3.5	-0.5	204.234	3.3	-0.6
Shelter	218.589	1.6	-0.5	211.337	1.2	-0.5
Rent of primary residence (1)	219.252	2.3	-1.2	219.252	2.3	-1.2
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence (1) (2)	214.119	0.2	-0.3	199.309	0.2	-0.3
Fuels and utilities	278.678	14.3	-2.2	276.510	13.6	-2.1
Household energy	261.062	16.5	-4.0	257.182	15.2	-3.8
Gas (piped) and electricity (1)	260.011	15.7	-4.0	256.852	14.9	-3.9
Electricity (1)	218.600	8.8	0.4	218.598	8.8	0.4
Utility (piped) gas service (1)	323.282	31.2	-11.8	323.284	31.2	-11.8
Household furnishings and operations	129.789	4.1	2.1	136.588	4.1	2.2
Apparel	127.550	11.0	6.5	132.127	10.4	7.2
Transportation	202.206	12.5	-3.0	204.898	13.8	-3.3
Private transportation	201.530	12.2	-3.1	202.842	13.7	-3.4
Motor fuel	331.121	36.8	-6.6	331.010	36.8	-6.6
Gasoline (all types)	327.456	36.2	-6.7	327.463	36.2	-6.7
Gasoline, unleaded regular (3)	325.159	36.2	-7.0	325.149	36.2	-7.0
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade (3) (4)	391.816	36.3	-6.4	391.816	36.3	-6.4
Gasoline, unleaded premium (3)	325.884	36.3	-5.6	325.868	36.3	-5.6
Medical care	324.200	1.8	1.5	320.009	1.8	1.9
Recreation (5)	112.905	-1.9	-0.3	109.455	0.6	0.3
Education and communication (5)	114.144	2.7	1.1	111.499	2.4	0.9
Other goods and services	316.410	1.8	-0.6	343.955	1.9	-0.7
Commodities	179.068	8.8	-0.1	187.825	10.1	-0.4
Services	244.541	2.9	-0.4	242.057	2.7	-0.5
All items less shelter	212.963	7.1	-0.2	218.076	8.2	-0.4
All items less medical care	204.221	5.2	-0.4	204.515	5.6	-0.5
Energy	268.643	26.2	-5.4	269.080	26.0	-5.4
All items less energy	204.394	2.3	0.6	202.049	2.3	0.6
All items less food and energy	201.047	1.8	0.5	198.658	1.8	0.5

Footnotes

(1) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(2) Index is on a November 1982=100 base.

(3) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(4) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

(5) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

- Data not available.

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