

# News

United States  
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**Bureau of Labor Statistics**

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## **CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES FOR ENERGY, FOOD AT HOME, AND SHELTER DALLAS-FORT WORTH, AUGUST 2008**

### **Energy costs record monthly decline, but food at home prices rise**

Energy prices fell 4.3 percent in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area during August, 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 monthly decline in energy costs since February of this year. Prices for food at home rose 0.4 percent in August, while the shelter index was essentially unchanged, slipping 0.1 percent. These data are based on the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U).

Led by lower motor fuel costs, the local energy index declined 4.3 percent in August - the sharpest one-month decrease since November 2006. Gasoline prices registered their first decline since February 2008, falling 7.9 percent in August. The average price for a gallon of gasoline in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area stood at \$3.689 in August. Due to increases earlier in 2008, gasoline costs were still 34.5 percent higher than a year ago. In a similar pattern, the cost of electricity edged down 0.4 percent in August, but rose 14.3 percent over the year. Partially countering the monthly decreases in gasoline and electricity, the index for utility (piped) gas service increased 3.6 percent during the month to a level 40.5 percent above a year ago. Combined, these annual price movements placed total energy costs 26.7 percent above August 2007 levels.

The index for food at home rose 0.4 percent in August following a 1.9-percent increase in July. During August, increases were noted for pork chops, apples, citrus fruits, fresh juices, and candy. These advances were partially offset by declines for steak, eggs, ice cream, and lettuce. During the previous 12 months, grocery prices rose 9.6 percent, the largest annual increase since July 1981. The food at home index (CPI-U, 1982-84=100) for Dallas-Fort Worth stood at 203.359 in August, meaning that a typical basket of grocery items priced at \$100.00 in 1982-84 cost area consumers \$203.36 last month.

## Dallas-Fort Worth Energy, Food At Home, and Shelter CPIs – August 2008 (Continued)

The shelter index was little changed in August, slipping 0.1 percent after increasing 0.3 percent in July. However, monthly movements within the different shelter categories were varied. Although the overall cost of shelter edged down in August, the index for renters' costs (rent of primary residence) rose 0.5 percent and homeowners' costs (owners' equivalent rent of primary residence) rose 0.3 percent. The index for shelter at school also rose in August, but these increases were countered by lower charges for hotels and motels. Over the year, renters' costs advanced 4.2 percent while homeowners' costs rose 2.8 percent. Shelter costs overall rose at a slower 2.0-percent pace due to an annual decline in the index for lodging away from home.

The Dallas-Fort Worth Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical 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 September 2008 Consumer Price Index for Dallas-Fort Worth for All Items will be released on October 16, 2008.