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For release Friday, August 31, 2012

12-1798-SAN

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**AVERAGE ENERGY PRICES IN THE SEATTLE AREA—
JULY 2012**

Seattle area consumers paid more than the U.S. city average for utility (piped) gas (34.0 percent), but less for electricity (-30.1 percent) in July 2012, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Richard J. Holden noted the gap between local and national prices for utility (piped) gas widened over the year while the differences between area and national electricity and gasoline prices were little changed. (See table A.) (All data in this release are not seasonally adjusted; accordingly, over-the-year analysis is used throughout.)

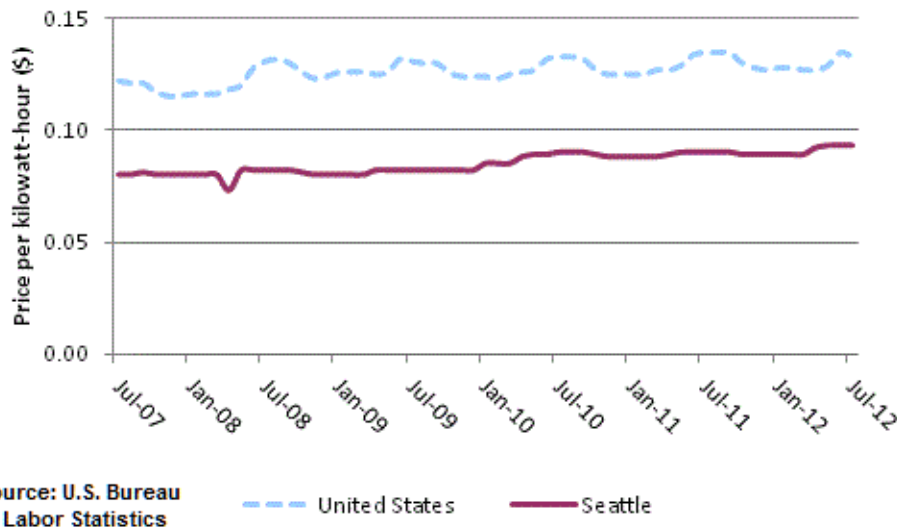
Table A. Average prices of selected energy products, United States and Seattle area, July 2011 and July 2012

	July 2011			July 2012		
	United States	Seattle	Percent Difference	United States	Seattle	Percent Difference
Electricity (per KWH)	\$0.135	\$0.090	-33.3	\$0.133	\$0.093	-30.1
Utility (piped) gas per therm	1.078	1.307	21.2	0.943	1.264	34.0
Gasoline per gallon	3.703	3.820	3.2	3.502	3.619	3.3

NOTE: A positive percent difference measures how much the price in the Seattle area is above the national price, while a negative difference reflects a lower price in the Seattle area.

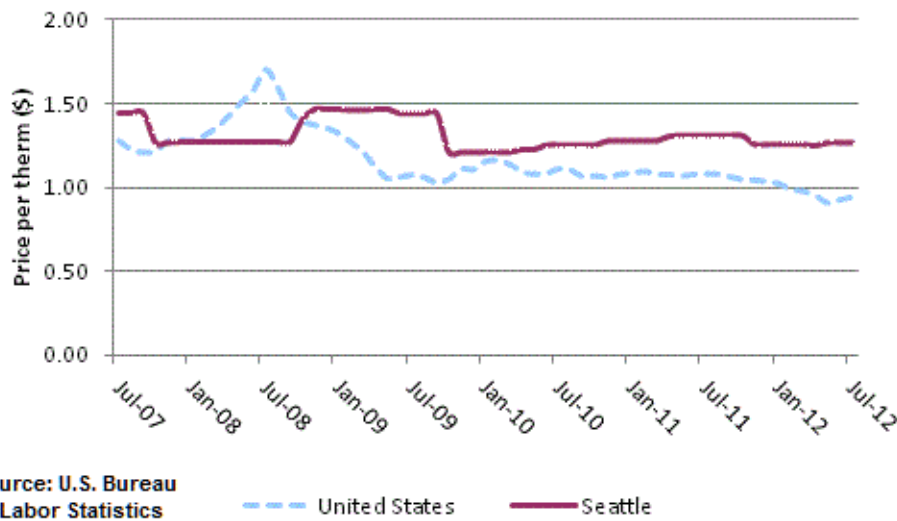
A kilowatt-hour (kWh) of electricity cost Seattle area consumers \$0.093 in July 2012, 3.3 percent more than one year earlier. Nationwide, electricity prices averaged \$0.133 in July 2012, little changed from the previous year. For the past five years, electricity prices in the Seattle area have been consistently below the national average and ranged from approximately 27.0 percent to over 38.0 percent lower. (See chart 1 and table 1.)

Chart 1. Average prices for electricity, United States and the Seattle area, July 2007 - July 2012



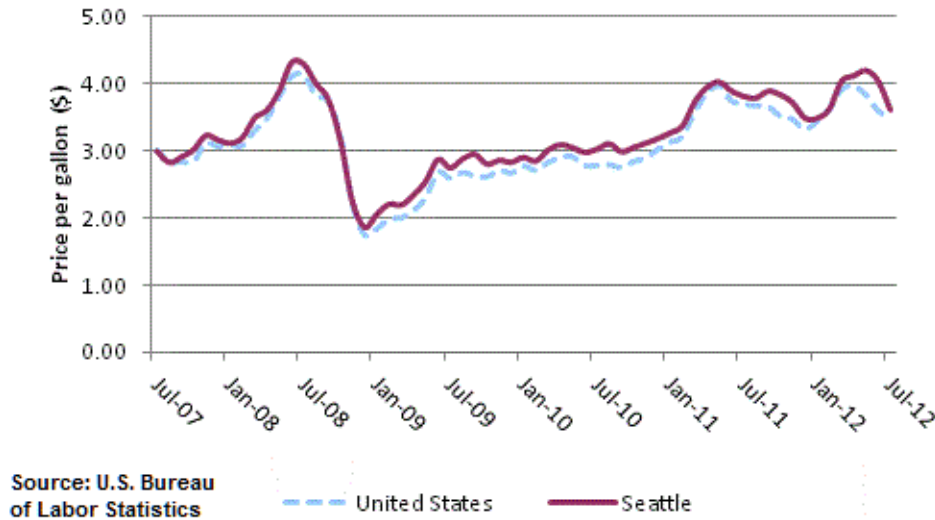
A therm—a measure of constant heating value—of utility (piped) gas, commonly referred to as natural gas, averaged \$1.264 in the Seattle area in July 2012, a decrease of 3.3 percent from the previous July. Nationwide, a therm averaged \$0.943 in July 2012, down 12.5 percent over the year. (See chart 2.)

Chart 2. Average prices for utility (piped) gas, United States and the Seattle area, July 2007 - July 2012



In July 2012, gasoline in Seattle averaged \$3.619 per gallon. Gas prices in Seattle were \$0.117 or 3.3 percent higher than the national average of \$3.502. Over-the-year, gasoline prices were down 5.3 percent in Seattle and down 5.4 percent nationwide. Gasoline prices in Seattle have not fallen below the U.S. city average since October 2008. (See chart 3.)

Chart 3. Average prices for gasoline, United States and the Seattle area, July 2007 - July 2012



Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA) Definition: The Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton, Wash. metropolitan area is comprised of Kitsap, Thurston, Island, King, Snohomish, and Pierce Counties of Washington.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

Technical Information

Average prices for electricity, utility (piped) gas, and gasoline are published monthly for the U.S. city average, the 4 regions, the 3 population size classes, 10 region/size-class cross-classifications, and the 14 largest local index areas. For electricity, average prices per kilowatt-hour (kWh) and per 500 kWh are published. For utility (piped) gas, average prices per therm, per 40 therms, and per 100 therms are published. For gasoline, the average price per gallon is published. Average prices for commonly available grades of gasoline are published as well as the average price across all grades.

Price quotes for 40 therms and 100 therms of utility (piped) gas and for 500 kWh of electricity are collected in sample outlets for use in the average price programs only. Since they are for specified consumption amounts, they are not used in the CPI. All other price quotes used for average price estimation are regular CPI data.

With the exception of the 40 therms, 100 therms, and 500 kWh price quotes, all eligible prices are converted to a price per normalized quantity. These prices are then used to estimate a price for a defined fixed quantity.

Table 1. Average prices for electricity, utility (piped) gas, and gasoline, United States and the Seattle area, July 2011 – July 2012, not seasonally adjusted

Year and Month	Electricity per kWh		Utility (piped) gas per therm		Gasoline per gallon	
	United States	Seattle	United States	Seattle	United States	Seattle
July 2011	\$0.135	\$0.090	\$1.078	\$1.307	\$3.703	\$3.820
August 2011	0.135	0.090	1.079	1.307	3.680	3.793
September 2011	0.135	0.090	1.063	1.307	3.664	3.896
October 2011	0.130	0.089	1.047	1.306	3.521	3.843
November 2011	0.128	0.089	1.044	1.253	3.475	3.725
December 2011	0.127	0.089	1.034	1.253	3.329	3.494
January 2012	0.128	0.089	1.021	1.253	3.447	3.488
February 2012	0.128	0.089	0.986	1.253	3.622	3.625
March 2012	0.127	0.089	0.978	1.253	3.918	4.046
April 2012	0.127	0.092	0.951	1.246	3.976	4.127
May 2012	0.129	0.093	0.907	1.264	3.839	4.207
June 2012	0.135	0.093	0.927	1.264	3.602	4.048
July 2012	0.133	0.093	0.943	1.264	3.502	3.619