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## Wyoming Cost of Living Index for the Fourth Quarter of 2015

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### Annual Statewide Inflation was 0.5%

CHEYENNE – The State of Wyoming, Economic Analysis Division reported that Wyoming experienced a 0.5% increase in annual (**All Items**) inflation from the fourth quarter of 2014 to the fourth quarter of 2015. Inflation is measured over six consumer categories in the Wyoming Cost of Living Index (WCLI). Statewide annual inflation rates by consumer category for the fourth quarter of 2015: Apparel (5.9%), Medical (5.0%), Food (2.2%), Housing (-0.3%), Recreation & Personal Care (-0.5%), and Transportation (-1.4%). The Housing category reported negative annual inflation for the first time since the fourth quarter of 2009. Wyoming consumers also continued to experience lower transportation costs over the year.

Inflation rates are also available for five regions in the State. For the fourth quarter of 2015, the Northwest region recorded the highest annual increase (2.7%) followed by the Southeast (1.1%), Southwest (1.1%), and Northeast (0.9%), while the Central region experienced deflation (-2.1%). Wyoming's economy has been impacted by lower commodity prices for oil and natural gas. The state experienced an employment decline over the year, with the mining sector being hit especially hard.

The Wyoming Cost of Living Index (WCLI) consists of two parts, **inflation**, which measures year-over-year change (annual) and the **Comparative Cost of Living Index** which compares each county's cost of living in one period (not over time). The inflation figures for the fourth quarter of 2015 represent the percent change in the price level of a standard basket of selected consumer items priced in the fourth quarter of 2015, compared with the price level of the same goods recorded one year ago (fourth quarter of 2014). The Comparative Cost of Living Index represents each county's price level compared to the statewide average (100) during a single time period, in this case, the fourth quarter of 2015.

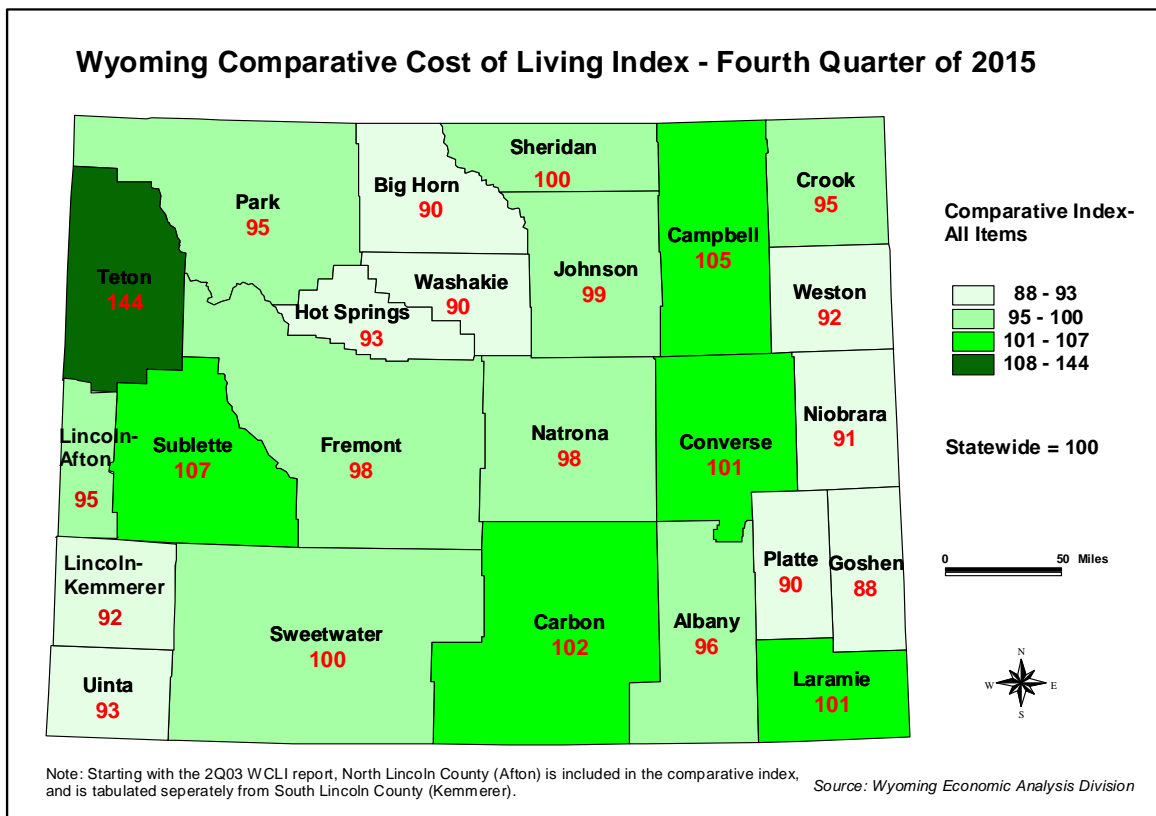
For the fourth quarter of 2015, the Comparative Cost of Living Index ranked Teton (144) as the county with the highest **All Items** value, which means that the cost of living in Teton County was an estimated 44% higher than the statewide average in the quarter. Sublette County ranked second in the **All Items** Comparative Cost of Living Index (107).

The **Housing** category carries the largest weight in a consumer's budget and typically drives the overall Comparative Cost of Living Index values. Comparative Cost of Living Index data were also produced by consumer category for every county. Counties with **Housing** category index

values above the statewide average in the fourth quarter of 2015 included Teton (178), Campbell (107), Laramie (106), Sublette (104), Carbon (103), and Converse (102). Historically, counties in Wyoming with mineral extraction industries tend to rank towards the top in the Comparative Cost of Living Index.

Counties with lower **All Items** Comparative Cost of Living Index values in the fourth quarter of 2015 included Goshen (88), Platte (90), Washakie (90), and Big Horn (90). These counties have small, rural populations, without much mineral extraction, and typically show lower **All Items** Comparative Cost of Living Index values.

Comparative Cost of Living Index values for all counties in Wyoming are listed in Table 1 on page 4. Movement in ranking from a previous survey does not indicate that the price level has increased or decreased in a particular county. Instead, these values reflect relative price levels in each county, *at the time of data collection*, compared with the statewide average of 100.



### Survey Methodology

The WCLI is produced biannually, the second quarter and fourth quarter. Price data are collected in twenty-eight cities and towns in Wyoming and the data are used to build a Comparative Cost of Living Index by county and to estimate overall inflation rates for Wyoming and the five designated regions of the State. A map of the twenty-eight cities where price data were collected is on page 5.

Communities across the State are included in the WCLI based on the following criteria: First, the

largest city or town in each county is priced; additionally, prices are collected in any city or town with populations greater than 5,000 or in cases of a city or town having at least 80% of a county's largest community's population. In counties where only one community was priced, those prices were used to represent the entire county. In counties where two communities were surveyed, a population weighted average of the prices for the two communities was used for the entire county. Also, starting with the second quarter of 2003 WCLI report, Afton, in Lincoln County, was added as a sampling point through legislative action in 2003. Kemmerer is still priced. Afton and Kemmerer report separate Comparative Cost of Living Index numbers. Beginning with the second quarter of 2004, Afton, has been included in the inflation calculations.

The 140 consumer items surveyed were aggregated into six categories, which were then weighted using item weights from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Consumer Price Index (CPI-U), reflective of their overall importance in the average consumer's budget. These categories, and their respective weight components, include Housing (48.8%), Transportation (15.3%), Food (14.3%), Recreation & Personal Care (9.7%), Medical (7.7%), and Apparel (4.2%).

The data were weighted by population to more accurately represent the price changes experienced by the majority of consumers in Wyoming, which showed an overall, statewide inflation rate of 0.5% in the fourth quarter of 2015. Nationally, the inflation rate from December 2014 to December 2015 was 0.7% (CPI-U), as reported by the BLS in the Consumer Price Index.

**The Division wishes to extend its sincere appreciation to all of the businesses and individuals whose cooperation and assistance made this survey possible.**

The WCLI is available on the Division's homepage at <http://eadiv.state.wy.us>. Previous WCLI reports are available online as well as historical inflation figures. For additional information about the survey, please contact the Division, phone: (307) 777-7504 or email: [ai-ead-info@wyo.gov](mailto:ai-ead-info@wyo.gov).

**Table 1 - Wyoming Comparative Cost of Living Index - 4Q15  
(Statewide Average = 100)**

COUNTY	Index Number by Category:						Recreation & Personal Care
	All Items	Food	Housing	Apparel	Transportation	Medical	
Teton	144	116	178	134	107	102	110
Sublette	107	114	104	117	105	101	111
Campbell	105	105	107	105	99	104	102
Carbon	102	100	103	104	99	113	92
Converse	101	102	102	87	100	104	98
Laramie	101	99	106	86	96	97	96
Sheridan	100	111	94	125	103	92	104
Sweetwater	100	98	100	92	102	103	99
Johnson	99	106	93	123	103	92	112
Natrona	98	92	100	98	98	92	101
Fremont	98	95	95	93	100	114	103
Albany	96	96	95	99	98	97	96
Crook	95	109	85	117	104	94	107
Park	95	102	88	108	102	107	97
Lincoln-Afton	95	99	87	99	104	92	112
Uinta	93	92	88	98	101	111	95
Hot Springs	93	104	83	99	102	102	99
Weston	92	99	83	97	104	102	99
Lincoln-Kemmerer	92	92	87	86	106	80	106
Niobrara	91	102	82	101	102	97	95
Big Horn	90	112	77	106	102	96	95
Washakie	90	99	80	103	102	95	98
Platte	90	102	78	90	102	107	96
Goshen	88	102	75	96	99	104	95

Starting with the 2Q03 Comparative Index, Lincoln-Afton was included.

**Table 2 - Annual Inflation Rates by Category**

QUARTER:	Inflation Rate by Category (Statewide Average):						Recreation & Personal Care
	All Items	Food	Housing	Apparel	Transportation	Medical	
<b>WEIGHTS:</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>48.8</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>9.7</b>
4Q09	2.7	-0.8	-0.6	1.7	16.9	2.8	2.6
2Q10	1.9	1.5	0.8	0.1	5.4	4.0	1.5
4Q10	2.9	4.2	2.1	1.0	5.0	5.4	0.7
2Q11	4.5	6.9	2.2	5.4	11.5	5.4	-0.8
4Q11	3.9	7.0	3.1	5.4	5.1	5.8	-0.4
2Q12	2.4	2.6	3.4	2.3	0.3	3.1	0.7
4Q12	2.1	1.3	3.1	4.5	-1.0	3.9	0.6
2Q13	3.1	1.6	4.0	5.4	1.8	4.3	1.1
4Q13	2.9	0.4	3.6	2.9	3.3	4.9	0.7
2Q14	2.7	3.0	3.9	7.8	-2.1	4.2	1.1
4Q14	1.1	4.1	3.7	3.7	-11.5	4.7	0.9
2Q15	0.9	1.7	1.9	2.5	-4.4	4.7	0.0
4Q15	0.5	2.2	-0.3	5.9	-1.4	5.0	-0.5

Note: Item weights may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Note: The 2Q99 inflation calculations mark the first time the WCLI used all 23 counties to calculate the inflation rates.

Previously, only 15 counties were used. Starting with the 2Q04 report, the inflation numbers include Lincoln-Afton.

**Table 3 - Annual Inflation Rates by Region**

QUARTER:	U.S. CPI*	Statewide All Items	Inflation Rate By Region (All Items):				
			Southeast	Southwest	Central	Northeast	Northwest
4Q09	2.7	2.7	3.4	1.5	2.7	3.0	2.1
2Q10	1.1	1.9	2.6	1.6	1.9	1.0	2.1
4Q10	1.5	2.9	3.2	2.1	3.4	1.7	3.8
2Q11	3.6	4.5	5.0	3.6	4.7	4.5	4.5
4Q11	3.0	3.9	4.1	3.3	4.8	2.7	4.2
2Q12	1.7	2.4	2.0	2.8	2.5	1.5	3.8
4Q12	1.7	2.1	3.4	1.6	1.8	0.3	2.1
2Q13	1.8	3.1	4.5	2.8	4.1	0.3	2.3
4Q13	1.5	2.9	3.4	1.9	2.9	2.7	3.0
2Q14	2.1	2.7	3.2	0.8	2.8	3.8	2.7
4Q14	0.8	1.1	0.3	-0.9	3.1	1.9	0.8
2Q15	0.1	0.9	0.8	-1.1	0.7	2.4	2.3
4Q15	0.7	0.5	1.1	1.1	-2.1	0.9	2.7

Note: The 2Q99 inflation calculations mark the first time the WCLI used all 23 counties to calculate the inflation rates.

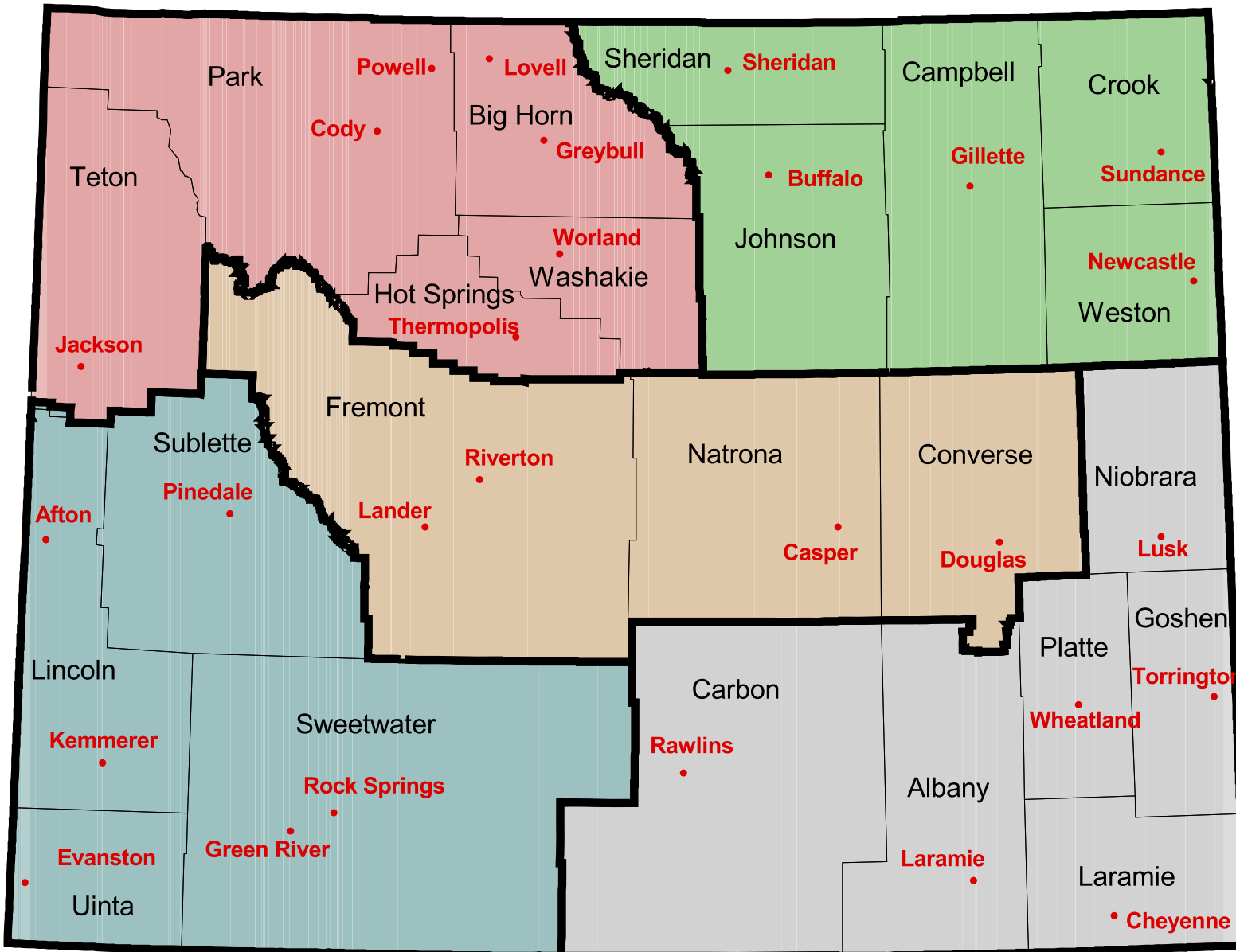
Previously, only 15 counties were used. Starting with the 2Q04 report, the inflation numbers include Lincoln-Afton.

\* 4th Quarter represents the December to December and 2nd Quarter represents the June to June percent change in the US CPI-U.

**Regional Composition for Inflation Estimate:**

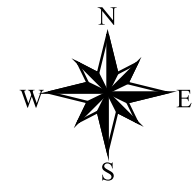
- Southeast: Albany, Carbon, Goshen, Laramie, Niobrara, and Platte counties.
- Southwest: Lincoln-Kemmerer, Lincoln-Afton, Sublette, Sweetwater, and Uinta counties.
- Central: Converse, Fremont, and Natrona counties.
- Northeast: Campbell, Crook, Johnson, Sheridan, and Weston counties.
- Northwest: Big Horn, Hot Springs, Park, Teton, and Washakie counties.

# Surveyed Communities and WCLI Regions



## WCLI Regions

- Southeast: Albany, Carbon, Goshen, Laramie, Niobrara, and Platte
- Southwest: Lincoln (Kemmerer), Lincoln (Afton), Sublette, Sweetwater, and Uinta
- Central: Converse, Fremont, and Natrona
- Northeast: Campbell, Crook, Johnson, Sheridan, and Weston
- Northwest: Big Horn, Hot Springs, Park, Teton, and Washakie



Note: Starting with the 2Q03 WCLI report, North Lincoln County (Afton) is included in the comparative index, and is tabulated separately from South Lincoln County (Kemmerer).

**WYOMING COST OF LIVING INDEX - TABLE 4  
AVERAGE RENTAL RATES - 4Q15 & 4Q14**

County	APARTMENT (1)			MOBILE HOME LOT (2)			HOUSE (3)			MOBILE HOME (4)		
	4Q15	4Q14	Percent Change	4Q15	4Q14	Percent Change	4Q15	4Q14	Percent Change	4Q15	4Q14	Percent Change
Albany	\$644	\$649	-0.8%	\$312	\$324	-3.7%	\$931	\$975	-4.6%	\$740	\$650	13.8%
Big Horn	\$475	\$450	5.5%	\$170	\$170	0.3%	\$611	\$575	6.3%	\$447	\$497	-10.1%
Campbell	\$753	\$778	-3.3%	\$449	\$437	2.8%	\$1,161	\$1,164	-0.3%	\$905	\$891	1.6%
Carbon	\$800	\$782	2.4%	\$321	\$312	2.7%	\$1,029	\$1,038	-0.9%	\$913	\$917	-0.5%
Converse	\$775	\$925	-16.2%	\$201	\$204	-1.2%	\$1,037	\$1,393	-25.6%	\$808	\$946	-14.5%
Crook	\$591	\$575	2.7%	NA	NA	NA	\$663	\$658	0.6%	NA	NA	NA
Fremont	\$667	\$647	3.1%	\$198	\$190	4.4%	\$899	\$965	-6.8%	\$709	\$754	-5.9%
Goshen	\$548	\$578	-5.1%	\$177	\$176	0.2%	\$589	\$609	-3.2%	NA	\$503	NA
Hot Springs	\$546	\$510	7.2%	\$212	\$222	-4.8%	\$679	\$613	10.9%	NA	\$508	NA
Johnson	\$642	\$662	-3.0%	\$309	\$286	7.9%	\$1,028	\$949	8.4%	\$571	\$540	5.7%
Laramie	\$793	\$772	2.7%	\$394	\$378	4.2%	\$1,121	\$1,129	-0.7%	\$826	\$782	5.6%
Lincoln (Kemmerer)	\$498	\$518	-3.9%	\$409	\$404	1.2%	\$670	\$622	7.7%	\$735	\$716	2.7%
Lincoln (Afton)	\$500	\$523	-4.4%	NA	NA	NA	\$793	\$775	2.3%	NA	NA	NA
Natrona	\$788	\$880	-10.4%	\$349	\$322	8.5%	\$1,094	\$1,208	-9.5%	\$611	\$600	1.8%
Niobrara	\$617	\$562	9.7%	NA	NA	NA	\$653	\$629	3.8%	NA	NA	NA
Park	\$576	\$577	-0.1%	\$256	\$245	4.5%	\$870	\$889	-2.2%	\$714	\$728	-2.0%
Platte	\$579	\$600	-3.6%	\$152	\$138	10.5%	\$645	\$565	14.2%	\$465	\$422	10.3%
Sheridan	\$669	\$639	4.7%	\$325	\$341	-4.8%	\$996	\$948	5.1%	\$567	\$498	13.7%
Sublette	\$818	\$819	-0.2%	NA	NA	NA	\$1,100	\$1,144	-3.8%	NA	NA	NA
Sweetwater	\$680	\$684	-0.6%	\$390	\$370	5.5%	\$1,022	\$1,055	-3.2%	\$841	\$800	5.2%
Teton	\$1,654	\$1,280	29.2%	\$430	\$424	1.5%	\$2,146	\$2,017	6.4%	\$958	\$925	3.6%
Uinta	\$601	\$600	0.2%	\$269	\$269	0.0%	\$871	\$850	2.5%	\$658	\$616	6.7%
Washakie	\$494	\$477	3.6%	NA	NA	NA	\$697	\$653	6.8%	NA	NA	NA
Weston	\$578	\$579	0.0%	\$159	\$136	16.5%	\$671	\$731	-8.2%	\$518	\$514	0.7%
Southeast	\$729	\$720	1.3%	\$340	\$332	2.3%	\$1,000	\$1,012	-1.2%	\$763	\$721	5.8%
Southwest	\$642	\$647	-0.9%	\$345	\$334	3.2%	\$938	\$947	-0.9%	\$707	\$693	2.0%
Central	\$751	\$815	-7.9%	\$289	\$270	6.8%	\$1,030	\$1,155	-10.8%	\$660	\$682	-3.1%
Northeast	\$695	\$698	-0.6%	\$358	\$353	1.4%	\$1,031	\$1,015	1.5%	\$725	\$688	5.4%
Northwest	\$871	\$752	15.8%	\$286	\$280	1.9%	\$1,179	\$1,134	4.0%	\$711	\$710	0.2%
Statewide Average	\$733	\$731	0.2%	\$325	\$315	3.2%	\$1,026	\$1,051	-2.4%	\$717	\$700	2.4%
Regions:							(1) - Two-bedroom, unfurnished, excluding gas and electric.					
<b>Southeast:</b> Albany, Carbon, Goshen, Laramie, Niobrara, Platte							(2) - Single-wide, including water.					
<b>Southwest:</b> Lincoln (Afton), Lincoln (Kemmerer), Sublette, Sweetwater, Uinta							(3) - Two or three-bedroom, single family, excluding gas and electric.					
<b>Central:</b> Converse, Fremont, Natrona							(4) - Two or three-bedroom, including lot rent.					
<b>Northeast:</b> Campbell, Crook, Johnson, Sheridan, Weston							Note: The regional averages are weighted by population within the region.					
<b>Northwest:</b> Big Horn, Hot Springs, Park, Teton, Washakie							(NA) - There were too few observations to report the data.					