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Wyoming Cost of Living Index for the Fourth Quarter of 2017

CHEYENNE – The State of Wyoming, Economic Analysis Division reported that Wyoming experienced a 2.3 percent increase in annual (**All Items**) inflation from the fourth quarter of 2016 to the fourth quarter of 2017. 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 2017: Food (3.5%), Medical (3.2%), Transportation (2.8%), Recreation & Personal Care (2.1%), Apparel (1.9%), and Housing (1.7%). For the first time since the fourth quarter of 2013, all consumer categories experienced annual inflation.

Inflation figures are also available for five regions in the State. For the fourth quarter of 2017, the Northwest region recorded the highest annual increase (3.9%) followed by the Southwest (2.9%), Southeast (2.2%), Central (1.9%), and Northeast (1.2%). In the fourth quarter of 2017, Wyoming experienced an annual increase in total employment for the first time since 2015. Wyoming has been in the midst an economic downturn since in early 2015. During this time, Wyoming experienced heavy employment losses and decreases in revenue due to a reduction in mineral extraction activities. In the fourth quarter of 2017, annual sales tax collections grew and mineral extraction activities expanded.

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) to the statewide average. The inflation figures for the fourth quarter of 2017 represent the percent change in the price level of a standard basket of selected consumer items priced in the fourth quarter of 2017, compared with the price level of the same goods recorded one year ago (fourth quarter of 2016). 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 2017.

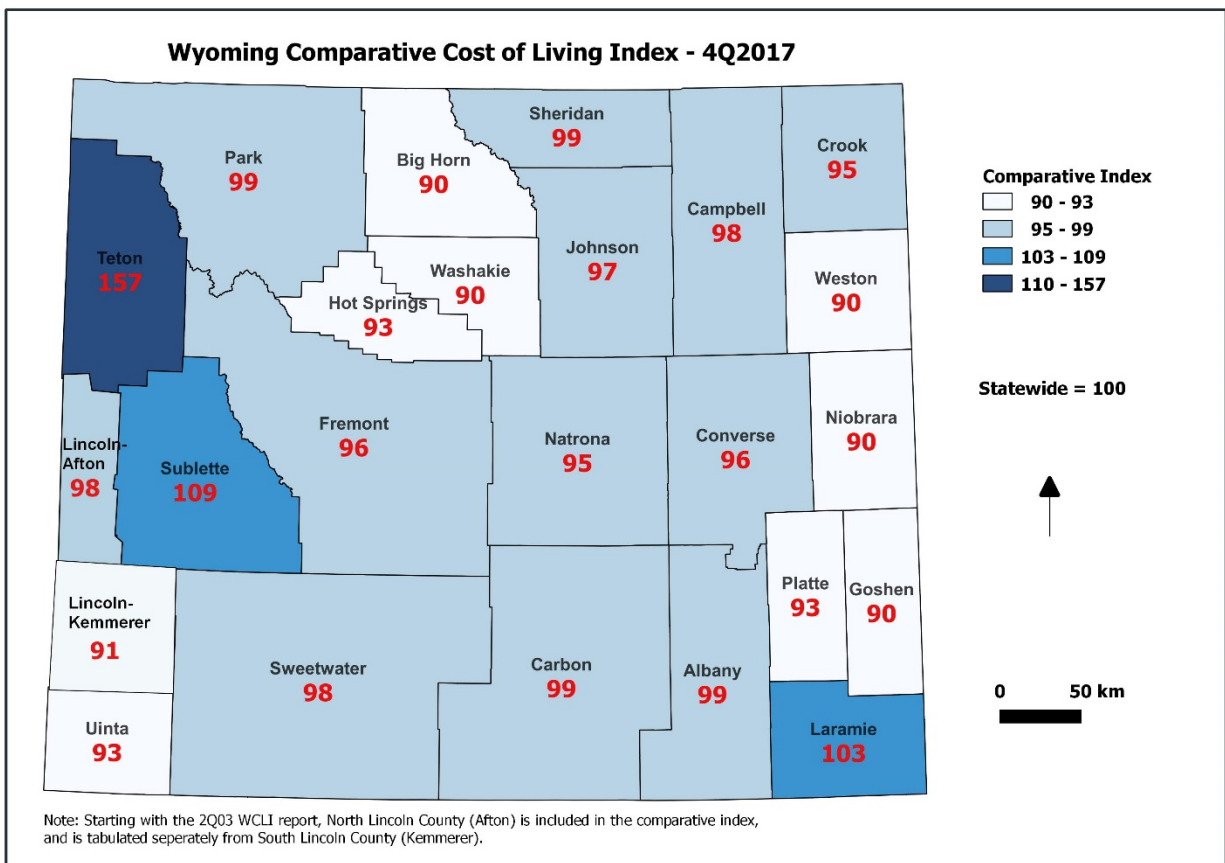
For the fourth quarter of 2017, the Comparative Cost of Living Index ranked Teton (157) as the county with the highest **All Items** value, which indicates that the cost of living in Teton County was estimated 57 percent higher than the statewide average in the quarter. Sublette County ranked second in the **All Items** Comparative Cost of Living Index (109).

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 2017 included Teton (206), Sublette (109), and Laramie (108).

Counties with lower **All Items** Comparative Cost of Living Index values in the fourth quarter of 2017 included Weston, Big Horn, Goshen, Niobrara, and Washakie. These counties have small, rural populations 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 percent 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. In addition, 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 (49.2%), Transportation (15.3%), Food (13.7%), Recreation & Personal Care (9.4%), Medical (8.5%), and Apparel (3.8%).

The data are 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 2.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2017. Nationally, the inflation rate from December 2016 to December 2017 was 2.1 percent (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.

Table 1 - Wyoming Comparative Cost of Living Index - 4Q17
(Statewide Average = 100)

COUNTY	Index Number by Category:						Recreation & Personal Care
	All Items	Food	Housing	Apparel	Transportation	Medical	
Teton	157	118	206	124	105	99	106
Sublette	109	115	109	112	104	103	112
Laramie	103	103	108	100	98	96	99
Park	99	104	95	107	103	102	103
Albany	99	105	98	102	97	93	101
Carbon	99	98	98	94	100	109	95
Sheridan	99	105	97	101	100	95	97
Lincoln-Afton	98	96	95	105	103	99	109
Sweetwater	98	93	97	91	102	109	97
Campbell	98	103	96	99	99	100	100
Johnson	97	102	92	114	103	97	101
Fremont	96	94	93	93	98	115	100
Converse	96	99	92	96	100	105	97
Crook	95	104	88	101	102	103	101
Natrona	95	91	95	97	99	94	98
Hot Springs	93	103	82	102	101	101	113
Uinta	93	94	87	88	100	110	99
Platte	93	97	84	111	102	102	100
Lincoln-Kemmerer	91	93	84	98	103	93	104
Washakie	90	100	79	102	102	93	110
Niobrara	90	97	82	100	100	95	97
Goshen	90	103	79	104	98	106	95
Big Horn	90	105	77	106	103	98	103
Weston	90	96	80	91	102	97	103

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	
WEIGHTS:	100.0	13.7	49.2	3.8	15.3	8.5	9.4
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
2Q16	-0.6	0.1	-0.6	-2.0	-2.7	4.3	-1.6
4Q16	0.6	1.4	-1.2	3.2	4.5	3.7	-1.5
2Q17	1.1	3.8	-0.3	5.4	1.1	3.3	1.3
4Q17	2.3	3.5	1.7	1.9	2.8	3.2	2.1

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	Inflation Rate By Region (All Items):				
		All Items	Southeast	Southwest	Central	Northeast	Northwest
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
2Q16	1.0	-0.6	1.0	-0.1	-3.2	-2.2	2.2
4Q16	2.1	0.6	3.1	-0.5	-1.3	-1.2	1.9
2Q17	1.6	1.1	1.7	1.1	0.2	0.4	2.7
4Q17	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.9	1.9	1.2	3.9

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

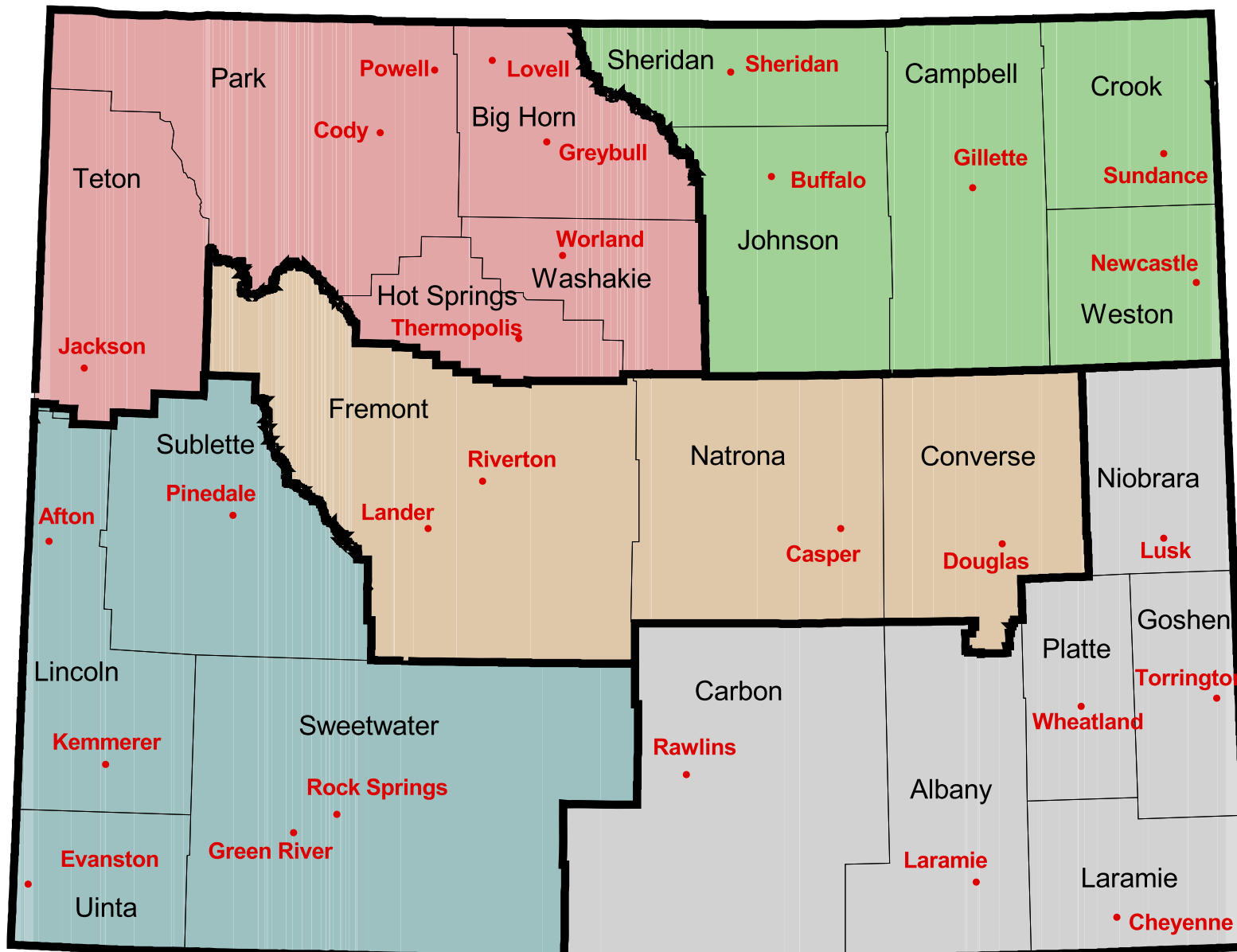
Previously, only 15 counties were used. Starting with the 2Q04 report, the inflation numbers include Lincoln-Afton.

* 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:

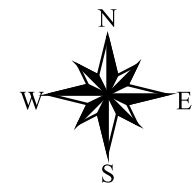
Southeast: Albany, Carbon, Goshen, Laramie, Niobrara, and Platte counties.
 Southwest: Lincoln-Kemmerer, Lincoln-Afton, Sublette, Sweetwater, and Uinta counties.
 Central: Converse, Fremont, and Natrona counties.
 Northeast: Campbell, Crook, Johnson, Sheridan, and Weston counties.
 Northwest: Big Horn, 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 - 4Q17 & 4Q16

County	APARTMENT (1)			MOBILE HOME LOT (2)			HOUSE (3)			MOBILE HOME (4)		
	4Q17	4Q16	Percent Change	4Q17	4Q16	Percent Change	4Q17	4Q16	Percent Change	4Q17	4Q16	Percent Change
Albany	\$669	\$655	2.1%	\$348	\$333	4.5%	\$968	\$971	-0.3%	\$806	\$806	0.0%
Big Horn	\$489	\$483	1.3%	\$195	\$180	8.7%	\$591	\$572	3.2%	\$457	\$493	-7.3%
Campbell	\$641	\$650	-1.3%	\$462	\$455	1.6%	\$1,010	\$968	4.3%	\$768	\$807	-4.9%
Carbon	\$703	\$800	-12.0%	\$364	\$329	10.5%	\$967	\$1,008	-4.1%	\$874	\$874	0.0%
Converse	\$607	\$608	-0.2%	\$205	\$201	1.9%	\$971	\$872	11.4%	\$713	\$727	-1.8%
Crook	\$632	\$628	0.6%	NA	NA	NA	\$697	\$715	-2.5%	NA	NA	NA
Fremont	\$675	\$672	0.4%	\$209	\$202	3.6%	\$864	\$889	-2.8%	\$661	\$696	-5.0%
Goshen	\$559	\$559	0.0%	\$212	\$170	24.5%	\$683	\$666	2.6%	\$474	\$459	3.2%
Hot Springs	\$505	\$541	-6.7%	\$206	\$206	0.0%	\$665	\$654	1.7%	\$608	\$589	3.3%
Johnson	\$597	\$596	0.2%	\$228	NA	NA	\$970	\$968	0.1%	\$535	\$598	-10.5%
Laramie	\$785	\$787	-0.2%	\$452	\$411	9.9%	\$1,180	\$1,129	4.6%	\$868	\$848	2.4%
Lincoln (Kemmerer)	\$479	\$474	0.9%	\$424	\$417	1.8%	\$663	\$666	-0.5%	\$665	\$735	-9.6%
Lincoln (Afton)	\$536	\$528	1.5%	NA	NA	NA	\$950	\$864	10.0%	NA	NA	NA
Natrona	\$691	\$660	4.7%	\$380	\$314	21.1%	\$1,022	\$970	5.4%	\$609	\$613	-0.5%
Niobrara	\$578	\$593	-2.4%	NA	NA	NA	\$678	\$675	0.4%	NA	NA	NA
Park	\$634	\$587	8.1%	\$300	\$301	-0.4%	\$920	\$856	7.4%	\$711	\$685	3.7%
Platte	\$611	\$599	2.0%	NA	NA	NA	\$720	\$696	3.5%	NA	NA	NA
Sheridan	\$697	\$680	2.4%	\$323	\$321	0.6%	\$1,034	\$1,020	1.3%	\$584	\$517	12.9%
Sublette	\$853	\$827	3.1%	NA	NA	NA	\$1,112	\$1,090	2.0%	NA	NA	NA
Sweetwater	\$626	\$644	-2.8%	\$414	\$403	2.9%	\$1,009	\$917	10.0%	\$821	\$781	5.0%
Teton	\$1,915	\$1,829	4.7%	\$551	\$481	14.6%	\$2,565	\$2,331	10.0%	\$1,118	\$1,008	10.9%
Uinta	\$600	\$602	-0.3%	\$294	\$281	4.4%	\$858	\$812	5.7%	\$646	\$668	-3.3%
Washakie	\$470	\$473	-0.6%	NA	NA	NA	\$713	\$685	4.0%	NA	NA	NA
Weston	\$566	\$594	-4.8%	\$160	\$158	1.4%	\$638	\$654	-2.5%	\$529	\$569	-7.1%
Southeast	\$724	\$730	-0.8%	\$390	\$355	9.9%	\$1,048	\$1,021	2.6%	\$811	\$795	2.0%
Southwest	\$619	\$624	-0.8%	\$374	\$355	5.4%	\$940	\$878	7.2%	\$692	\$697	-0.7%
Central	\$677	\$658	2.9%	\$311	\$268	15.7%	\$970	\$935	3.7%	\$636	\$649	-2.1%
Northeast	\$648	\$649	-0.1%	\$358	\$352	1.5%	\$964	\$943	2.3%	\$661	\$665	-0.5%
Northwest	\$970	\$928	4.5%	\$343	\$320	7.2%	\$1,324	\$1,223	8.2%	\$762	\$726	4.8%
Statewide Average	\$716	\$709	1.0%	\$357	\$330	8.3%	\$1,035	\$991	4.4%	\$719	\$714	0.7%
Regions:							(1) - Two-bedroom, unfurnished, excluding gas and electric.					
Southeast: Albany, Carbon, Goshen, Laramie, Niobrara, Platte							(2) - Single-wide, including water.					
Southwest: Lincoln (Afton), Lincoln (Kemmerer), Sublette, Sweetwater, Uinta							(3) - Two or three-bedroom, single family, excluding gas and electric.					
Central: Converse, Fremont, Natrona							(4) - Two or three-bedroom, including lot rent.					
Northeast: Campbell, Crook, Johnson, Sheridan, Weston							Note: The regional averages are weighted by population within the region.					
Northwest: Big Horn, Hot Springs, Park, Teton, Washakie							(NA) - There were too few observations to report the data.					