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## Metro Café Prices to Rise 15 Percent Beginning Oct. 15

- Rising food and labor costs drive increase

(Oct. 7, 2008) Responding to rising food and labor costs, the Cafeteria Committee has agreed to an across-the-board 15 percent increase by Aramark, the vendor who runs the Metro Café. The new prices will take effect Wednesday, Oct. 15.



Metro Café patron Elizabeth McGowan and Aramark cashier Liz Bedoy at the noontime rush. Photo: Gayle Anderson

For example, these increases will raise the cost of a 16-ounce fountain drink from 90 to 99 cents. A breakfast burrito will go from \$2.99 to \$3.29, and a four-ounce cheeseburger combo will go from \$3.59 to \$4.13.

"We've been studying a price increase since May, and we wouldn't have given it to Aramark if they hadn't justified it," said Phyllis Meng, facilities maintenance supervisor and leader of the Cafeteria

Committee. Meng emphasized that the Oct. 15 increase would be the first price increase in the three years Aramark has run the Metro Café.

According to Meng, wheat prices have doubled between May 2007 and September 2008. Paper goods and fresh vegetables have increased over six percent, dwarfed by the 31 percent increase in dairy and the 39 percent increase in eggs.

"We looked at a lower price increase, but a smaller increase would not have addressed the rising food and labor costs," Meng said. She added that the Consumer Price Index for food purchased to be eaten at home has risen almost 7 percent in 2008.

Besides Meng, the Cafeteria Committee includes Jean Belvin, contract administrator; Amy Hughes, equipment maintenance manager; Irma Licea, general services manager; Velma Marshall, DEO Real Estate, and Tommye Williams, Contract Administration manager.

"Even with the price increase, the Metro Café remains a bargain when compared with restaurants near Gateway Plaza," Meng added.