



# The Daily

Statistics Canada

Monday, November 23, 1998

For release at 8:30 a.m.

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## MAJOR RELEASES

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- **Home repairs and renovations, 1997** 2  
Canadians got out their hammers and nails in 1997, increasing spending on home repairs and renovations for the first time in three years. Homeowners spent \$12.8 billion to improve and maintain their dwellings, up 7.3% from 1996. And more of them appeared to be doing it themselves.

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## MAJOR RELEASES

### Home repairs and renovations

1997

Canadians got out their hammers and nails in 1997, increasing spending on home repairs and renovations for the first time in three years. And more of them appeared to be doing it themselves.

Homeowners spent \$12.8 billion to improve and maintain their dwellings, up 7.3% from 1996. Spending increased faster on building materials than it did on contractors, indicating a movement toward "do-it-yourself" activity.

On average, homeowners spent \$1,712 in 1997, up \$95 from the previous year. Although this average spending was still considerably below the peak of \$2,197 in 1989, it was the first increase since 1994.

Of the nation's 7.5 million homeowners in 1997, 9.2% spent more than \$5,000. Still, for many homeowners, expenditures were modest (about 17% spent less than \$250).

#### Total homeowner repair and renovation expenditures

	Current dollars	1997 Constant dollars
	billions of dollars	
1987	11.8	16.3
1988	11.5	15.3
1989	13.8	17.8
1990	13.3	16.6
1991	12.0	13.8
1992	12.7	14.1
1993	12.8	13.8
1994	12.8	13.2
1995	12.0	12.3
1996	11.9	12.1
1997	12.8	12.8

#### Purchases of building materials on the rise

On average, homeowners spent \$655 on building materials in 1997, up 11.6% from the year before. On the other hand, average spending on contract work reached \$1,056, up a slight 2.5% from 1996.

The larger increase in spending on building materials may be a result of a number of factors including activity in the housing market. According to the Canadian Real Estate Association, resales increased 3% in 1997. At the same time new housing construction increased 18%, according to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Homeowners who

#### Note to readers

The data from the Homeowner Repair and Renovation Survey were collected from a sample of approximately 20,300 homeowners, which represent about 70% of the total home renovation market.

Expenditures (with examples) are broken down as follows: **Additions:** adding a room, deck, garage, fence; **Renovations and alterations:** remodelling rooms such as bathrooms and kitchens, upgrading doors or windows, adding eavestroughing; **Replacement of equipment:** replacing plumbing, electrical fixtures, heating or air conditioning equipment, replacing flooring; **New installations:** installation of equipment and fixtures which were not in the dwelling previously (plumbing, electrical, air conditioning wall-to-wall carpeting); **Repairs and maintenance:** interior and exterior painting, repairs to walls and ceilings, caulking and weather-stripping, fence and deck repairs. Contract work includes contract (including labour and materials) and/or separate hired labour costs. Materials include all building supplies purchased by the homeowner.

All survey data presented in this release are in current dollars, except in the first table. Current dollars were converted to constant dollars using indices reflecting changes in union wages and the price of materials in the construction field were used. Only total expenditures have been adjusted for inflation. Therefore, only this data series is available in constant dollars.

move tend to still make some improvements to tailor their new home to their preference. Homeowners, on average, allocate about \$6 to contractors out of every \$10 they spend on repairs and renovations.

#### Homeowner repair and renovation average expenditure 1997

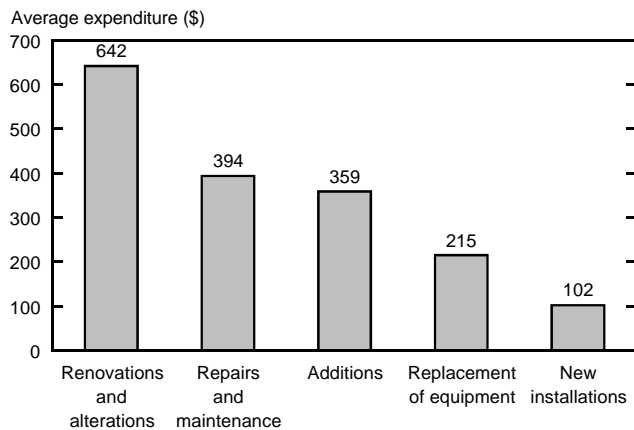
	Average expenditure	Contract	Materials
	dollars		
<b>Canada</b>	<b>1,712</b>	<b>1,056</b>	<b>655</b>
Newfoundland	1,451	487	964
Prince Edward Island	1,599	989	610
Nova Scotia	1,527	894	633
New Brunswick	1,303	755	547
Quebec	1,625	844	781
Ontario	1,814	1,270	544
Manitoba	1,377	776	601
Saskatchewan	1,567	874	693
Alberta	1,756	1,092	664
British Columbia	1,863	1,130	732

**Renovations driven by owners of single-family dwellings**

Owners of single-detached dwellings accounted for the lion's share of repairs and renovations in 1997, spending 86% of the \$12.8 billion total (or an average of \$1,821). In contrast, apartment owners spent an average of \$934, while owners of other types of housing (such as town houses) spent \$1,365.

Of five broad expenditure categories, homeowners spent the most, an average of \$642, on renovations and alterations, and the least (\$102) on new installations, such as electrical and plumbing fixtures, heating and air conditioning, and carpeting.

**Average expenditure by repair and renovation categories, 1997**



Homeowners in the age group 35 to 44 spent on average the most on home improvements (\$2,077), possibly because they were renovating to meet the needs of an expanding family. The age group 45 to 54 followed closely, with average spending of \$1,927. By comparison, homeowners aged 65 and over spent on average only \$1,110.

Not surprisingly, seniors devoted three-quarters of their spending to contractors. In contrast, homeowners

under the age of 35 spent only half of their repair and renovation dollars on contract work.

Homeowners living in urban areas with a population of 500,000 and more contracted out about two-thirds of their repair and renovation budget. By comparison, those in rural areas contracted out only about half of their budget.

**British Columbia, Ontario homeowners spent the most on average**

Homeowners in British Columbia spent the highest average (\$1,863) on repairs and renovations in 1997, followed closely by those in Ontario, with an average of \$1,814. By comparison, homeowners in New Brunswick spent the least, an average of \$1,303 per household.

Do-it-yourself activity had the largest share of the market in Newfoundland, where homeowners allocated 66 cents of every repair and renovation dollar to buying building materials. Homeowners in Ontario, on the other hand, allocated only 30 cents of every dollar to material purchases.

Free data for the 1997 Homeowner Repair and Renovation Survey are available on Statistics Canada's website ([www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca)). The menu path is "Canadian statistics", "The people", "Families, households and housing" and "Expenditures".

Semi-custom tables (62C0011) that present data by level of expenditure, type of dwelling, period of construction, age of reference person, province, and size of area residence are now available as well as custom tabulations.

The publication, *Homeowner repair and renovation expenditure in Canada, 1997* (62-201-XPB), will be released in February 1999. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Client Services (1 888 297-7355 or 613-951-7355; [income@statcan.ca](mailto:income@statcan.ca)), Income Statistics Division. ■

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## OTHER RELEASES

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### Electric lamps

October 1998

Light bulb and tube manufacturers sold 28.3 million light bulbs and tubes in October, an increase of 7.6% from the 26.3 million a year earlier.

Year-to-date sales at the end of October totalled 237.1 million light bulbs and tubes, a decrease of 4.2% from the 247.5 million a year earlier.

The October 1998 issue of *Electric lamps* (43-009-XPB, \$7/\$62) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Russell Kowaluk (613-951-0600; [kowarus@statcan.ca](mailto:kowarus@statcan.ca)), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

### Construction type plywood

September 1998

Firms produced 157 609 cubic metres of construction type plywood during September, up 6.3% from the 148 218 cubic metres produced during September 1997.

Year-to-date 1998 production totalled 1 313 230 cubic metres, a decrease of 5.4% from the 1 387 475 cubic metres produced during the same period in 1997.

**Available on CANSIM: matrix 122 (level 1).**

The September 1998 issue of *Construction type plywood* (35-001-XPB, \$7/\$62) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Gilles Simard, (613-951-3516; [simales@statcan.ca](mailto:simales@statcan.ca)), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

### Domestic and international shipping

January to June 1998 (preliminary)

Canadian ports handled 168.3 million tonnes of domestic and international cargo during the first half of 1998, up 3.5% from the same period in 1997. This increase was propelled by a robust international sector, led by trans-shipments of crude petroleum, inbound shipments of coal and outbound shipments of iron ore.

**Available on CANSIM: matrices 145 and 146.**

Preliminary statistics for January to June 1998 will be published in the *Surface and marine transport: Service bulletin, Vol. 14, no. 5* (50-002-XIB, \$10/\$62). See *How to order publications*.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Robert Larocque (613-951-2486; fax: 613-951-0009; [laroque@statcan.ca](mailto:laroque@statcan.ca)), Transportation Division. ■

## PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

**New motor vehicle sales, September 1998**  
**Catalogue number 63-007-XIB**  
 (Canada: \$13/\$124; outside Canada: US\$13/US\$124).

**Canadian international merchandise trade, September 1998**  
**Catalogue number 65-001-XIB**  
 (Canada: \$14/\$141; outside Canada: US\$14/US\$141).

**Canadian international merchandise trade, September 1998**  
**Catalogue number 65-001-XPB**  
 (Canada: \$19/\$188; outside Canada: US\$19/US\$188).

**All prices exclude sales tax.**

Catalogue numbers with an -XIB or an -XIE extension are Internet versions; those with -XMB or -XME are microfiche; and -XPB or -XPE denote a paper version.

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Simplify your data search with the *Statistics Canada Catalogue* (11-204-XPE, \$16; outside Canada: US\$16).

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11-001E (P. 001) 11-001E (P. 001) 11-001E (P. 001)

**The Daily**  
 Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 3, 1997  
 For release at 9:30 a.m.

**MAJOR RELEASES**

- **Urban transit, 1995** 2  
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 40 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the last 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1996** 4  
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was noticeably weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

**OTHER RELEASES**

- **Help-wanted index, May 1997** 3
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Statistics Canada

### Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001E.

Published each working day by the Communications Division, Statistics Canada, 10-H, R.H. Coats Bldg., Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6.

To access *The Daily* on the Internet, visit our site at <http://www.statcan.ca>. To receive *The Daily* each morning by E-mail, send an E-mail message to [listproc@statcan.ca](mailto:listproc@statcan.ca). Leave the subject line blank. In the body of the message, type "subscribe daily firstname lastname".

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