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The Daily

Statistics Canada

Thursday, August 13, 1998
For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

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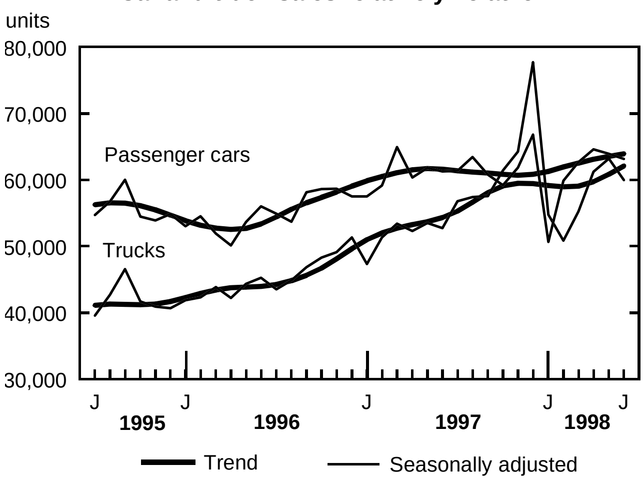
MAJOR RELEASES

New motor vehicle sales
June 1998

New motor vehicle sales fell 3.1% in June to 123,113 units. This was the first month-over-month decline since January 1998 and the second largest decline since May 1997. The decline occurred mostly in truck sales (-5.1%) although car sales also fell (-1.2%). Sales of new cars increased steadily between April 1996 and April 1997 but have flattened since. New truck sales began increasing in January 1996 and have flattened since October 1997. Recent sales of new motor vehicles have been relatively volatile. (All numbers are seasonally adjusted unless otherwise specified).

Car and truck sales relatively volatile



The Big Three (General Motors, Ford and Chrysler) posted their first month-to-month decline (-3.7%) in new car sales since January 1998. Sales of new cars manufactured in North America increased marginally in June (+0.1%), but remained 1.3% below the same period a year earlier. Although sales of new cars manufactured overseas declined 6.6% in June, they remained 30.2% higher compared with June 1997.

Strong truck (+11.1%) and stagnant new car (-0.1%) sales led to a 5.1% advance in new motor vehicle sales during the first half of 1998 compared with the same period last year.

Note to readers

Passenger cars include those used for personal and commercial purposes (such as taxis or rental cars). Trucks include minivans, sport utility vehicles, light and heavy trucks, vans, coaches and buses.

The Big Three manufacturers are General Motors, Ford and Chrysler. The Big Three may sell new motor vehicles manufactured in North America as well as overseas (imported).

For reasons of confidentiality, the Yukon and Northwest Territories are included with British Columbia.

Sales up in the East, down in the West

With the exception of Prince Edward Island (-0.4%), new motor vehicle dealers east of Manitoba recorded sales gains for the first six months of 1998 compared with the same period in 1997 (unadjusted for seasonality). New Brunswick was the only province to post a double-digit gain (+12.1%).

Dealers in the western provinces experienced declining sales for the first half of 1998 compared with the same period in 1997 — with the exception of Alberta (+6.0%, unadjusted for seasonality). The largest decline occurred in British Columbia (-8.6%), while new motor vehicle sales also fell in Saskatchewan (-7.4%) and Manitoba (-4.0%). In comparison, all provinces posted double-digit gains for the first six months of 1997 compared with the same period in 1996.

Semi-annual new motor vehicle sales

	Jan. to June 1997	Jan. to June 1998	
	unadjusted for seasonality		
			% change
Canada	**711,431**	**746,913**	**5.0**
Newfoundland	11,294	11,781	4.3
Prince Edward Island	2,440	2,431	-0.4
Nova Scotia	20,624	22,165	7.5
New Brunswick	18,856	21,131	12.1
Quebec	180,741	194,071	7.4
Ontario	268,754	291,414	8.4
Manitoba	22,546	21,646	-4.0
Saskatchewan	20,053	18,560	-7.4
Alberta	81,494	86,348	6.0
British Columbia	84,629	77,366	-8.6

New Brunswick experienced the largest percentage gain in new car (+6.9%) and truck (+17.6%) sales during the first half of 1998 compared with the same period in 1997. Consumers east of Manitoba continued their love affair with trucks, resulting in double-digit gains in all provinces except Prince Edward Island. With the exception of Alberta, consumers in the western provinces purchased fewer cars and trucks than in the first half of 1997 (unadjusted for seasonality).

Available on CANSIM: matrix 64.

The June 1998 issue of *New motor vehicle sales* (Internet version: 63-007-XIB, $13/$124) will be available shortly. See *How to order to publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Chantal McIvor (613-951-3549). For analytical information, contact Jeff Fritzsche (613-951-2812; *fritjef@statcan.ca*), Retail Trade Section, Distributive Trades Division. □

New motor vehicle sales

	June 1997	May 1998[r]	June 1998[p]	June 1997 to June 1998	May 1998 to June 1998
	seasonally adjusted				
				% change	
New motor vehicles	**114,000**	**127,096**	**123,113**	**8.0**	**-3.1**
Passenger cars	61,264	63,904	63,162	3.1	-1.2
North American[1]	52,751	52,039	52,081	-1.3	0.1
Imports	8,513	11,865	11,081	30.2	-6.6
Big Three automakers	36,728	36,692	35,331	-3.8	-3.7
Other automakers	24,536	27,212	27,831	13.4	2.3
Trucks, vans and buses	52,736	63,192	59,951	13.7	-5.1

	June 1997	June 1998[p]	June 1997 to June 1998	Market share June 1997	Market share June 1998
	unadjusted				
			% change	%	
New motor vehicles	**136,006**	**152,505**	**12.1**		
Passenger cars	76,375	82,600	8.2		
North American[1]	66,497	69,692	4.8	87.1	84.4
Imports	9,878	12,908	30.7	12.9	15.6
Big Three automakers	48,447	49,818	2.8	63.4	60.3
Other automakers	27,928	32,782	17.4	36.6	39.7
Trucks, vans and buses	59,631	69,905	17.2		
North American[1]	55,116	64,976	17.9	92.4	92.9
Imports	4,515	4,929	9.2	7.6	7.1

r *Revised figures.*
p *Preliminary figures.*
1 *Manufactured or assembled in Canada, the United States or Mexico.*

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OTHER RELEASES

Machinery and equipment price indexes
Second quarter 1998 (preliminary)

The Machinery and Equipment Price Index reached 128.6 in the second quarter of 1998 (1986=100), up 0.8% from the previous quarter and 3.5% higher compared with the second quarter of 1997. The domestic (+0.2%) and imported (+1.3%) components of the Index increased from the previous quarter and were up 2.2% and 4.7% respectively from the second quarter of 1997.

Among industries, the largest contributors to the quarterly price movement in the Index were manufacturing (+1.2%), transportation, communication, storage and utilities (+0.8%), mines, quarries and oil wells (+1.4%) and construction (+1.3%).

The largest year-over-year quarterly increases occurred in manufacturing (+4.4%), transportation, communication, storage and utilities (+3.3%), agriculture (+2.9%), mines, quarries and oil wells (+4.8%) and construction (+4.9%).

The industrial products that contributed substantially to changes in machinery and equipment prices since the first quarter of 1998 include specialized industrial equipment (+1.6%), commercial trucks and tractors (+0.8%), aircraft (+2.4%), packaging machinery and lubricating equipment (+1.5%), farm and garden tractors (+0.7%), marine engines and turbines (+0.8%) and industrial electric equipment (+0.8%). The drop in passenger automobile prices (-1.0%) was due to price reductions to help boost sales and strengthen market share.

Much of the overall increase in prices was due to the appreciation of the U.S. dollar, which advanced 1.7% against the Canadian dollar since the first quarter of 1998 and was 5.1% higher compared with the second quarter of 1997.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 2023-2025.

The second quarter issue of *Construction price statistics* (62-007-XPB, $24/$79) will be available in September. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Elvira Marinelli (613-951-3350; fax: 613-951-2848; *infounit@statcan.ca*), Client Services Unit, Prices Division.

Machinery and equipment price indexes
(1986=100)

	Relative importance	Second quarter 1998[P]	First quarter 1998 to Second quarter 1998	Second quarter 1997 to Second quarter 1998
			% change	
Machinery and Equipment Price Index	**100.0**	**128.6**	**0.8**	**3.5**
Industry				
Agriculture	11.0	154.5	0.0	2.9
Forestry	1.5	140.2	0.6	3.2
Fishing	0.6	126.8	0.8	5.2
Mines, quarries and oil wells	6.0	130.5	1.4	4.8
Manufacturing	29.9	135.4	1.2	4.4
Construction	3.5	133.5	1.3	4.9
Transportation, communication, storage and utilities	25.9	120.6	0.8	3.3
Trade	4.0	117.3	0.6	2.6
Finance, insurance and real estate	1.8	101.6	0.3	1.2
Community, business and personal services	11.1	109.4	0.3	1.3
Public administration	4.7	125.1	1.1	3.5

[P] *Preliminary figures.*

■

Industrial monitor on CD-ROM

August 1998

The *Industrial Monitor on CD-ROM* offers up-to-date data on more than 150 manufacturing industries and 33 other industries covering construction, wholesale trade and retail trade. This information is offered for 24 sectors and can be purchased by individual sector or as a complete package.

For each industry, up to 50 variables are organized in the "Table Viewer" according to five table types: supply, demand, price, labour/employment, and investment/capital stock. The underlying database is also available via the "Series Browser" for more extensive time series analysis and inter-industry comparisons.

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The August 1998 issue of the *Industrial Monitor on CD-ROM* is now available. An annual subscription (one CD-ROM per month) to the full package (15F0015XCB) costs $995, a savings of more than 80% off the annual subscription price of $258 per individual sector.

For further information, or to request a free demonstration CD-ROM, contact Kim Lauzon (613-951-9417; fax: 613-951-3688; *lauzonk@statcan.ca*), Industry Measures and Analysis Division, or contact your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre. ■

Steel primary forms

Week ending August 8, 1998 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending August 8, 1998, totalled 299 606 metric tonnes, up 7.1% from the week-earlier 279 718 tonnes and down 3.6% from the year-earlier 310 778 tonnes. The cumulative total at the end of the week was 9 883 619 tonnes, a 7.2% increase compared with 9 222 323 tonnes for the same period in 1997.

For further information on this release, contact Huguette Montcalm (613-951-9827; *monthug@statcan.ca*), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Shipments of rolled steel

June 1998

Rolled steel shipments for June totalled 1 168 392 metric tonnes, down 1.0% from 1 180 014 tonnes in May and down 4.1% from 1 218 019 tonnes in June 1997.

Year-to-date shipments at the end of June totalled 7 293 098 tonnes, up 0.3% from 7 268 321 tonnes during the same period a year earlier.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 58 and 122 (series 22-25).

The June 1998 issue of *Primary iron and steel* (41-001-XPB, $7/$62) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Huguette Montcalm (613-951-9827; *monthug@statcan.ca*), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Steel wire and specified wire products

June 1998

Shipments of steel wire and specified wire products totalled 75 707 metric tonnes in June, up 3.1% from 73 416 tonnes in June 1997. Production and export market data for selected commodities are also available.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 122 (series 19).

The June 1998 issue of *Steel wire and specified wire* products (41-006-XPB, $7/$62) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Etienne Saint-Pierre (613-951-9837; *saineti@statcan.ca*), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Production and shipments of steel pipe and tubing, June 1998
Catalogue number 41-011-XPB
(Canada: $7/$62; outside Canada: US$7/US$62).

Industry price indexes, June 1998
Catalogue number 62-011-XPB
(Canada: $22/$217; outside Canada: US$22/US$217).

All prices exclude sales tax.

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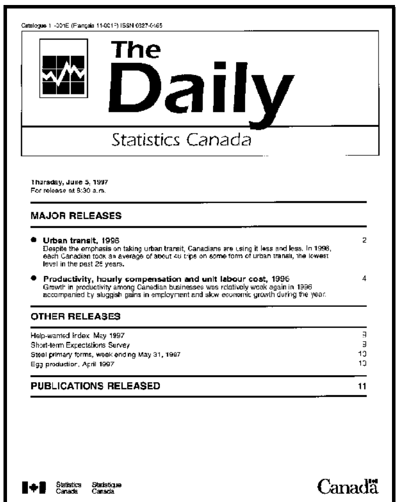
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MAJOR RELEASES

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

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