



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Monday, April 12, 1999

For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

There are no major releases today.

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OTHER RELEASES

New Housing Price Index

February 1999

In February 1999, the New Housing Price Index for Canada increased 0.5% compared with February 1998. On a month-to-month basis, this index of contractors' selling prices for new houses remained unchanged from January to February.

The largest monthly increases were noted in Quebec City (+0.7%) and Montreal (+0.6%) as builders passed on increases in construction costs to new home buyers. Smaller increases were also noted in several other Canadian cities. However, these increases were offset by monthly decreases registered in Victoria (-0.9%), Windsor (-0.6%), Vancouver (-0.4%) and several other Canadian cities. Seven of the 21 cities surveyed showed no monthly change in February.

Annual changes varied considerably among the cities surveyed. The largest annual increase was in the active Calgary (+5.6%) market. The largest annual decreases were in Victoria (-6.5%) and Vancouver (-5.5%) where market conditions remain poor.

Note: The total New Housing Price Index for January 1999 has fallen below the level of its two components, the House Only Index and the Land Only Index. (This situation has occurred in several previous months.) The drop in January occurred because the component index series is derived and linked independently. Linking, in particular, creates total indices that are not averages of their sub-indices in a strict sense.

New housing price indexes

(1992=100)

	Feb. 1999	Feb. 1998 to Feb. 1999	Jan. 1999 to Feb. 1999
		% change	
Canada total	100.3	0.5	-
House only	101.0	0.9	0.2
Land only	102.0	0.4	-
St. John's	96.3	-0.5	-
Halifax	110.1	3.0	-
Charlottetown	103.5	2.0	-
St. John-Moncton-Fredericton	93.5	-0.6	0.2
Quebec City	99.8	1.0	0.7
Montréal	103.3	0.8	0.6
Ottawa-Hull	98.5	1.5	0.3
Toronto	103.2	2.1	0.1
Hamilton	102.6	1.2	0.2
St. Catharines-Niagara	100.7	1.5	-0.3
Kitchener-Waterloo	101.0	1.4	-0.1
London	98.6	1.3	0.2
Windsor	105.2	-0.1	-0.6
Sudbury-Thunder Bay	99.9	-0.9	-
Winnipeg	112.4	0.4	-
Regina	127.1	3.4	0.4
Saskatoon	112.7	1.3	-
Calgary	127.3	5.6	0.4
Edmonton	108.9	2.4	-
Vancouver	84.6	-5.5	-0.4
Victoria	76.7	-6.5	-0.9

- Nil or zero.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 9921.

The first quarter 1999 issue of *Construction price statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$24/\$79) will be available in June. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Louise Chaîné (613-951-3350; fax: 613-951-1539; infounit@statcan.ca), Client Services Unit, Prices Division. ■

Monthly Survey of Large Retailers

January 1999

January sales, for the group of large retailers, hit \$5.1 billion, an increase of 6.4% compared with the same month last year. Over the same period, sales for total retail trade, excluding motor and recreational vehicle

dealers, increased 1.6%. (All data in this release are unadjusted for seasonality.)

All major product lines sold by the group of large retailers in January experienced strong year-over-year sales increases, with the exception of food and beverages (+2.2%). Hardware and lawn and garden products recorded the highest growth in sales, followed by health and personal care products, housewares and sporting and leisure goods.

Of all the goods sold by the group of large retailers in January, hardware and lawn and garden products showed the strongest growth compared with the same month last year (up 19.4% or \$25 million). Outdoor power equipment (such as snowblowers, garden tractors) accounted for the majority of the year-over-year sales increase of these goods. In fact, the sale of outdoor power equipment in January was more than double what it was in the same month in 1998. January's snowstorms contributed to this increase.

Health and personal care products recorded the second largest year-over-year increase (up 13.3% or \$46 million). Sales of prescription and over the counter drugs were up 19.9% (+\$29 million) from last January. Drugs accounted for 45% of all the health and personal care products sold by the group of large retailers. Sales of personal care products (cosmetics and other toiletries) accounted for the majority of the category and advanced 8.1%.

Housewares had the third highest year-over-year increase in sales (+10.3% or \$24 million). For the most part, this was due to the year-over-year increase in the sale of household cleaning supplies (chemical and paper products sales jumped by \$21 million compared with the same period in 1998). These products account for over 50% of sales in this category of goods.

The sporting and leisure goods category for the group of large retailers also recorded a healthy year-over-year increase of 9.7% in January. Pre-recorded audio and video tapes and discs grew by \$6.3 million (+19.1%). Toys increased by \$4.5 million (+11.2%). Sporting goods advanced \$3.3 million (+6.0%). Year-over-year sales increases in ski equipment (\$2.5 million) and exercise and fitness equipment (\$2 million) offset a drop in hunting, fishing and camping supplies (down \$3.6 million).

Sales by commodity for the group of large retailers January 1999

	Jan. 1998	Jan. 1999	Jan. 1998 to Jan. 1999
	unadjusted		
	\$ 000,000		% change
Commodities			
Food and beverages	2,063	2,108	2.2
Health and personal care products	346	392	13.3
Housewares	232	256	10.3
Clothing, footwear and accessories	729	786	7.8
Home furnishings and electronics	614	669	9.0
Hardware and lawn and garden products	129	154	19.4
Sporting and leisure goods	165	181	9.7
All other goods and services	477	515	8.0
Total	4,755	5,061	6.4

For data or general information, contact the Client Services Unit (1 877 421-3067; retailinfo@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Veronica Utovac (951-0669) Retail Commodity Section, Distributive Trades Division. ■

Department store sales and stocks February 1999

Department store sales fell 2.6% in February to \$1,463.7 million (seasonally adjusted). Sales in January 1999 were \$1,502.2 million. Department store sales were 2.7% higher in February compared with the same month last year. Sales in February 1998 were \$1,425.3 million. Sales in department stores have generally been rising since the autumn of 1998 after a pause in the spring and summer of 1998. Department store sales experienced a period of strong advances from the summer of 1996 to the spring of 1998, following a period of gradual advances from mid-1993.

Unadjusted for seasonality, department store sales increased in virtually every province in February 1999 compared with the same period last year. Saskatchewan (+10.9%), Manitoba (+8.2%) and Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island (+7.5%) posted the largest increases. Quebec posted the only decline (-1.4%).

Available on CANSIM: matrices 111-113.

Accounts receivable data for department stores are available through the Client Services Unit, Distributive Trades Division.

For data or general information, contact the Client Services Unit (613-951-3549; 1 877 421-3067,

retailinfo@ststcan.ca). For analytical information, or to enquire about concepts, methods or data quality for this release, contact Greg Peterson (613-951-3592; petegre@statcan.ca), Retail Trade Section, Distributive Trades Division.

Department store sales including concessions

	Feb. 1998	Feb. 1999	Feb. 1998 to Feb. 1999	Jan. to Feb. 1999	Jan. - Feb. 1998 to Jan. - Feb. 1999
unadjusted					
	\$ millions		% change	\$ millions	% change
Canada	947.1	988.2	4.3	1,977.8	5.8
Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island	17.1	18.4	7.5	36.0	8.7
Nova Scotia	27.3	27.7	1.5	55.9	4.8
New Brunswick	19.7	20.2	2.6	40.4	3.0
Quebec	178.2	175.8	-1.4	362.0	5.2
Ontario	398.1	423.4	6.3	846.1	7.6
Manitoba	38.4	41.5	8.2	81.9	5.4
Saskatchewan	30.4	33.7	10.9	67.1	9.3
Alberta	112.1	120.1	7.1	235.3	5.8
British Columbia, Yukon, Northwest Territories ¹	125.8	127.5	1.3	253.1	0.7

¹ For reasons of confidentiality, data for Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, and British Columbia, the Yukon and Northwest Territories are combined.

Steel pipe and tubing

February 1999

Steel pipe and tubing production for February totalled 200 892 tonnes, a 5.3% decrease from 212 123 tonnes a year earlier.

Year-to-date production to the end of February 1999 totalled 406 542 tonnes, down 5.0% from 428 094 tonnes during the same period in 1998.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 35.

The February 1999 issue of *Steel pipe and tubing* (41-011-XIB, \$5/\$47) 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 Greg Milsom (613-951-7093; milsomg@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Oil pipeline transport

January 1999

Net receipts of crude oil and equivalent hydrocarbons totalled 12 207 754 cubic metres in January, down 8.3% from January 1998. Net receipts of liquefied petroleum gases and refined petroleum products in January (6 687 542 cubic metres) decreased 1.4% from January 1998.

Pipeline exports of crude oil (5 509 943 cubic metres) decreased 14.6% from January 1998, and pipeline imports (1 405 027 cubic metres) decreased 9.6%.

January deliveries of crude oil by pipeline to Canadian refineries totalled 5 786 866 cubic metres, decreased 0.2% from January 1998. January deliveries of liquefied petroleum gases and refined petroleum products increased 7.3% to 591 965 cubic metres.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 181 and 591-595.

The January 1999 issue of *Oil pipeline transport* (55-001-XPB, \$12/\$114) will be available the third week of April. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this

release, contact Eleonore Harding (613-951-5708; hardele@statcan.ca), Energy Section, Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Production and shipments of steel pipe and tubing, February 1999
Catalogue number 41-011-XIB
(Canada: \$5/\$47; outside Canada: US\$5/US\$47).

A five-year strategic plan for the development of an information system and technology, 1998
Catalogue number 88-523-XPB
(Canada: \$36; outside Canada: US\$36).

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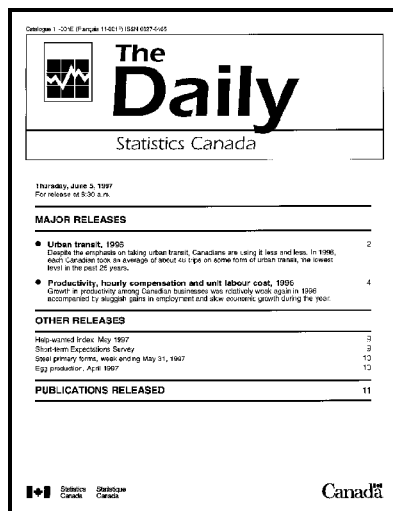
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Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

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.

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