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# The Daily

## Statistics Canada

**Thursday, April 8, 1999**
For release at 8:30 a.m.

## MAJOR RELEASES



*(continued on following page)*


### Travel-log
Spring 1999

The Spring 1999 issue of *Travel-log*, which features the article "An analysis of developments in tourism markets in Latin America and Caribbean region", is now available.

This issue examines the extent and economic importance of inbound and outbound tourism in the Latin American and Caribbean regions. Also considered are the prospects of the region becoming a major tourist generating area, identifying and exploring some of the pressure points that will constrain the region's tourism growth over the next decade, and assessing Canada's ability to capture anticipated growth in outbound tourism from this area.

Each quarter, *Travel-log* examines trends in the Travel Price Index, profiles the latest travel indicators and international travellers' characteristics.

The Spring 1999 (Vol. 18, no. 2) issue of *Travel-log* (87-003-XPB, $13/$42, Internet version: 87-003-XIB, $10/$32) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, contact Monique Beyrouti (613-951-1673, fax: 613-951-2909, *beyrmon@statcan.ca*), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.

## OTHER RELEASES



## PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

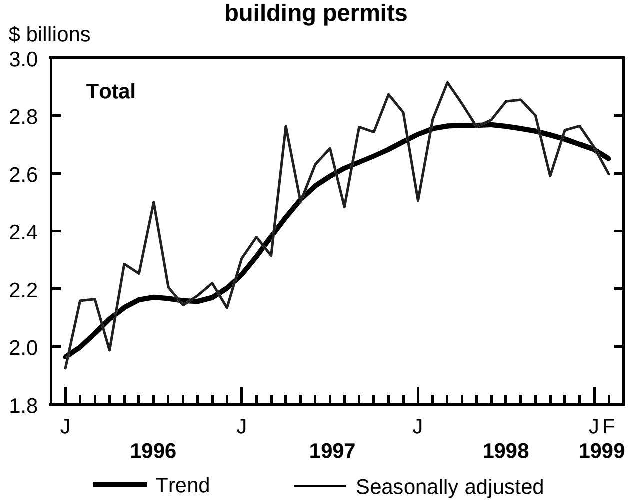
# MAJOR RELEASES

## Building permits
February 1999

The value of building permits declined for a second month in a row in February to $2.6 billion. A decrease in the non-residential sector (-10.2%) more than offset an increase in residential construction intentions (+2.4%).

Overall, the value of permits issued by municipalities in February was down 3.4% from January. After two monthly decreases, construction intentions in the housing sector increased to $1.5 billion. Intentions fell to $1.1 billion in the non-residential sector — the first decline in three months.

**Second monthly decline in total value of building permits**




### Single-family intentions led the way in residential sector

Growth in the housing sector in February was due to an increase in intentions for single-family dwellings, which more than offset a decline in multi-family dwelling intentions. The value of single-family permits jumped 6.0% to $1.1 billion, its highest level since December 1997. On the other hand, the value of multi-family permits fell 7.4% to $359 million, the third consecutive monthly decline.

Although the residential trend has shown some signs of slowing lately, the single home trend seems to be maintaining its positive direction. In addition, since the beginning of 1999, housing intentions are 3.5% higher than the same period in 1998. Furthermore, long-term mortgage rates have remained favourable, housing prices were stable and employment rose for an eighth consecutive month. Full-time positions continued to grow — particularly in industries that pay well on average, such as manufacturing and utilities. These factors seem to point to a positive outlook — especially for single-family dwellings in the comings months.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation reported a 1.5% increase in housing starts in February 1999. Also, sales of existing homes in February posted the largest monthly gain in over two years (+12.3%), after a sharp decline in January, according to the Canadian Real Estate Association.

Provincially, the largest growth occurred in Ontario (+5.4% to $658 million), Prince Edward Island (+296.3% to $8 million), the Northwest Territories (+464.9% to $6 million) and Alberta (+2.2% to $238 million). In Prince Edward Island, the Northwest Territories and Alberta, multi-family dwellings led the way. In contrast, single-family dwellings were the main factor behind the increase in Ontario.

The largest declines in February occurred in Quebec (-4.2% to $273 million) and Manitoba (-20.9% to $29 million). In both provinces, the decrease resulted mainly from lower intentions in multi-family dwellings, although in Quebec, single-family dwelling permits still registered a high not seen since mid-1994.

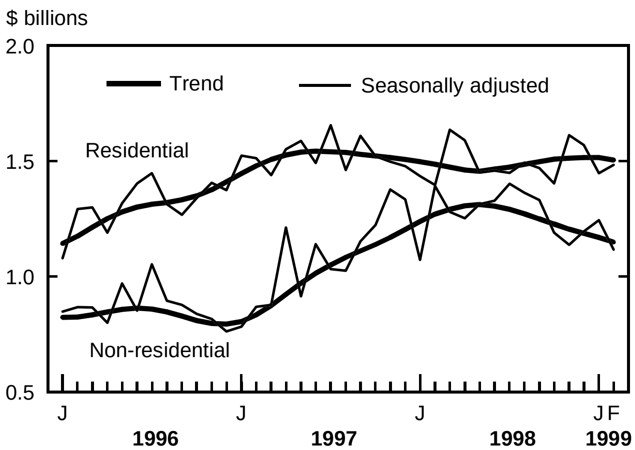
**Note to readers**

*Unless otherwise stated, this release presents seasonally adjusted data, which ease comparisons by removing the effects of seasonal variations.*

*The Building and demolitions permits monthly survey covers 2,600 municipalities representing 94% of the population. It provides an early indication of building activity. The communities representing the other 6% of the population are very small, and their levels of building activity have little impact on the total.*

*The value of planned construction activities shown in this release excludes engineering projects (e.g., waterworks, sewers, culverts) and land. The annual rate is a monthly figure that has been seasonally adjusted and multiplied by 12 to reflect annual levels.*

**Residential permit value up in February**




### Decline in the non-residential sector widespread

All three components (industrial, commercial and institutional) were factors in the 10.2% decline in permits in the non-residential sector.

Industrial intentions (the hardest hit component) tumbled 24.8% to $287 million — their lowest level since January 1998. Manufacturing, plants and utilities showed the most significant losses.

The commercial component fell for the second consecutive month, down 4.7% compared with an 11.2% decline in January. Lower intentions for warehouses and laboratories more than offset moderate gains in office buildings, hotels and restaurants.

A large decline in permits for welfare and nursing homes pushed the institutional component down 0.9% in February 1999. Significant gains in the education and medical moderated the overall decline.

Provincially, Alberta recorded a significant decrease (-39.2%) in the value of non-residential building permits to $120 million, its lowest level since July 1997. This reflected a 75% decline in the institutional component. In Quebec, building intentions decreased 15.2% to $253 million — mostly due to the industrial component. In Newfoundland, both commercial and institutional components contributed to a 72.2% decline to $11 million.

In contrast, the most significant increase was reported in Ontario (+8.8% to $543 million), where the institutional component soared 122.6% to reach $141 million. In British Columbia, an increase in the commercial component was the main factor behind a 28.2% gain, which brought the level of non-residential permits to $99 million.

**Available on CANSIM: matrices 80 (levels 3-7 and 33-48), 129, 137, 443, 989-992, 994, 995 and 4073.**

The February 1999 issue of *Building permits* (64-001-XIB, $19/$186) will be available shortly on the Internet. See *How to order publications*.

The March 1999 building permits estimates will be released on May 4, 1999. For further information or to enquire about the methods, concepts or data quality of this release, contact Joanne Bureau (613-951-9689; *burejoa@statcan.ca*). For analytical information, contact Ginette Gervais (613-951-2025; *gervgin@statcan.ca*), Investment and Capital Stock Division. □

## Value of building permits

| | Jan. 1999[r] | Feb. 1999[p] | Jan. to Feb. 1999 | Feb. 1998 to Feb. 1999 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | seasonally adjusted | | | |
| | $ millions | | % change | |
| **Canada** | **2,689.4** | **2,597.6** | **-3.4** | **-6.8** |
| Residential | 1,446.8 | 1,481.7 | 2.4 | 6.2 |
| Non-residential | 1,242.6 | 1,115.9 | -10.2 | -19.8 |
| Newfoundland | 52.7 | 28.4 | -46.2 | 8.4 |
| Residential | 12.1 | 17.1 | 40.7 | 10.4 |
| Non-residential | 40.6 | 11.3 | -72.2 | 5.5 |
| Prince Edward Island | 4.6 | 10.6 | 129.3 | 129.9 |
| Residential | 2.1 | 8.1 | 296.3 | 94.6 |
| Non-residential | 2.6 | 2.4 | -4.6 | 479.6 |
| Nova Scotia | 74.6 | 72.5 | -2.8 | 54.1 |
| Residential | 36.6 | 41.0 | 12.2 | 51.0 |
| Non-residential | 38.0 | 31.5 | -17.1 | 58.2 |
| New Brunswick | 30.4 | 29.7 | -2.3 | 4.2 |
| Residential | 21.4 | 22.1 | 3.3 | 16.6 |
| Non-residential | 9.0 | 7.6 | -15.5 | -20.3 |
| Quebec | 583.9 | 526.6 | -9.8 | -0.4 |
| Residential | 285.4 | 273.4 | -4.2 | 26.5 |
| Non-residential | 298.6 | 253.3 | -15.2 | -18.9 |
| Ontario | 1,123.6 | 1,201.0 | 6.9 | 1.5 |
| Residential | 624.6 | 658.1 | 5.4 | 14.1 |
| Non-residential | 498.9 | 542.9 | 8.8 | -10.5 |
| Manitoba | 87.7 | 53.1 | -39.5 | -19.5 |
| Residential | 36.3 | 28.7 | -20.9 | 8.4 |
| Non-residential | 51.5 | 24.4 | -52.7 | -38.3 |
| Saskatchewan | 35.4 | 34.4 | -2.7 | 8.3 |
| Residential | 13.7 | 12.4 | -9.8 | -28.1 |
| Non-residential | 21.7 | 22.1 | 1.8 | 51.2 |
| Alberta | 430.9 | 358.4 | -16.8 | -27.7 |
| Residential | 232.8 | 238.0 | 2.2 | -9.3 |
| Non-residential | 198.1 | 120.4 | -39.2 | -48.4 |
| British Columbia | 255.1 | 274.0 | 7.4 | -26.1 |
| Residential | 178.3 | 175.4 | -1.6 | -22.8 |
| Non-residential | 76.9 | 98.6 | 28.2 | -31.4 |
| Yukon | 2.5 | 1.4 | -46.3 | -23.5 |
| Residential | 2.5 | 1.2 | -53.5 | 9.7 |
| Non-residential | 0.0 | 0.2 | 592.9 | -72.7 |
| Northwest Territories | 7.9 | 7.5 | -5.3 | 309.5 |
| Residential | 1.1 | 6.3 | 464.9 | 387.6 |
| Non-residential | 6.8 | 1.2 | -82.0 | 125.3 |

[r] *Revised.*
[p] *Preliminary.*
***Note:*** *Data may not add to totals due to rounding.*

■

# OTHER RELEASES

## Initiative to create a product classification system

Statistics Canada, in cooperation with Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía, e Informática and the U.S. Economic Classification Policy Committee, recently developed the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS Canada 1997). Statisitcs Canada now proposes to develop a Product Classification system in cooperation with these organizations. In the first instance, the initiative will cover the products of the service sectors of Finance and Insurance (Sector 52 excluding subsector 524 Insurance Carriers and Related Activities); Information and Cultural Industries (Sector 51); Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (Sector 54); and Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services (Sector 56) of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS Canada 1997).

The objective of this initiative is to develop a market-oriented and demand-based classification system for products. Grouping and aggregating commodities by demand side characteristics is required for the economic analysis of market share, and import competition. The goal of the three countries is to develop a product classification system that is not industry-of-origin based, but can be linked to the NAICS industry structure; is consistent across the three countries and encompasses the products of both services and goods industries alike; and promotes improvements in the Central Product Classification System of the United Nations.

The initiative will begin with the four areas of services aforementioned. Statistics Canada is interested in undertaking widespread consultation with users and industry representatives to obtain their input into the project. Consultation for the project will focus on identifying and defining service products and developing a classification system to support the collection of data on the value of detailed products sold, transferred at a price, or produced for final consumption by other businesses or persons; and the prices charged for these products.

This notice requests assistance in developing the classification from users of product data, industry analysts and experts, trade associations, or persons with knowledge of products of these service sector industries. Consultation with Statistics Canada can be by phone, fax, E-mail or by mail. If you would like to be consulted in this process, contact Shaila Nijhowne (613-951-8576; fax: 613-951-8578; Internet: *Nijhsha@statcan.ca*; A-8, 12th Floor, Jean Talon Building, Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa. K1A 0T6), Director, Standards Division.

More detailed documentation on this initiative is available from Statistics Canada's web site (*www.statcan.ca*) under "Concepts, definitions and methods" and "Standard classifications" or on the U.S. Census Web site (*www.census.gov/*). ■

## Steel primary forms

Week ending April 3, 1999 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending April 3, 1999, totalled 302 746 tonnes, down 4.7% from the week-earlier 317 529 tonnes and down 3.8% from the year-earlier 314 738 tonnes. The cumulative total at the end of the week was 3 955 832 tonnes, a 4.4% decrease compared with 4 135 626 tonnes for the same period in 1998.

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. ■

## Cement

February 1999

Manufacturers shipped 495 967 tonnes of cement in February, down 5.6% from 525 209 tonnes in February 1998, and up 21.1% from 409 669 tonnes in January 1999.

Year-to-date shipments totalled 905 636 tonnes (revised), down 5.0% from 953 327 (revised) during the same period in 1997.

**Available on CANSIM: matrices 92 and 122 (series 35).**

The February 1999 issue of *Cement* (44-001-XIB, $5/$47) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Étienne Saint-Pierre (613-951-9837; *sainteti@statcan.ca*), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

## Egg production
February 1999 (preliminary)

Egg production estimates for February are now available.

**Available on CANSIM: matrices 1145, 1146 and 5689-5691.**

To order *Production of eggs* (23-003-XPB, $110/year), contact Julie Gordon (613-951-5039), Agriculture Division.

For further information on this release, contact Sandy Gielfeldt (613-951-2505), Livestock and Animal Product Section, Agriculture Division ■

# PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

**Crude petroleum and natural gas production**, December 1998
**Catalogue number 26-006-XPB**
(Canada: $19/$186; outside Canada: US$19/US$186).

**Cement**, February 1999
**Catalogue number 44-001-XIB**
(Canada: $5/$47; outside Canada: US$5/US$47).

**Travel-log: An analysis of developments in tourism markets in Latin America and Caribbean region**, Spring 1999
**Catalogue number 87-003-XIB**
(Canada: $10/$32; outside Canada: US$10/US$32).

**Travel-log: An analysis of developments in tourism markets in Latin America and Caribbean region**, Spring 1999
**Catalogue number 87-003-XPB**
(Canada: $13/$42; outside Canada: US$13/US$42).

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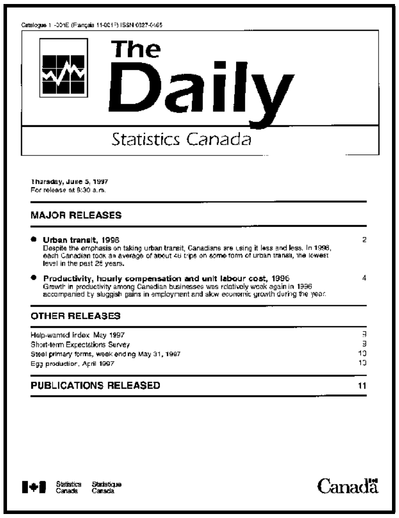
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Thursday, June 5, 1997
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MAJOR RELEASES

- **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 46 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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