

Tuesday, July 20, 1999
For release at 8:30 a.m.

## MAJOR RELEASES

- Canadian international merchandise trade, May 1999

Exports increased more than imports in May, pushing the trade balance to $\$ 2.4$ billion.

- Wholesale trade, May 1999

Wholesalers took a step forward in May, with sales rising $1.8 \%$ to $\$ 29.8$ billion after a slight decline in April.
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## Health indicators <br> 1999

Health indicators 1999 is an electronic database which combines summary information on topics such as workplace injuries, births, stillbirths and deaths, as well as data on chronic conditions. For the first time, this database is available on compact disc. This edition also provides data from about 20 new indicators from the National Population Health Survey, including use of medication, use of health services and unmet health care needs. In addition, it contains a series of eight new tables on selected reasons for hospitalization and selected procedures in hospitals as well as data on causes of death for 1996 and 1997.

Health indicators 1999, is designed to meet the needs of a wide range of clients: market researchers, educators, students, special interest groups, as well as policy makers and program managers. Clients can examine the health status of Canadians, as well as health-care use and performance. Nearly three million data points are available for analysis.

The 1999 edition of the Health indicators ( $82-221-\mathrm{XCB}, \$ 100$ ) is now available. See How to order publications.

For more information, contact Deirdre Gillieson (613-951-1635; fax: 613-951-0792), Health Statistics Division.

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## MAJOR RELEASES

## Canadian international merchandise trade

May 1999
Exports increased more than imports in May, pushing the trade balance to $\$ 2.4$ billion.

Exports rose $0.5 \%$ to $\$ 28.9$ billion. However, they have increased very little from the previous record level of January 1999 ( $\$ 28.8$ billion). The marked increase in exports of coal, wheat, seafood, cars and minerals more than offset the sharp drop in aircraft and forest product exports.

Imports remained virtually unchanged for the third consecutive month ( $+0.1 \%$ ). The recovery in imports of machinery and equipment and automotive parts was almost completely offset by the drop in imports of gold, iron and steel products and active agents in the manufacture of medication.


The trade balance remained strong, increasing from a revised $\$ 2.3$ billion in April to $\$ 2.4$ billion in May. This balance has been steady since January (a monthly average of $\$ 2.4$ billion) at levels clearly

## Note to readers

To improve data quality, the methodology used to estimate custom-based monthly canola exports to non-U.S. destinations has been modified. Canadian Grain Commission figures are used to supplement information from custom export declarations. January to May 1999 data reflect this methodology. Previous estimates corrected during the annual revision process also use this new methodology.

Merchandise trade is one component of the current account of Canada's balance of payments, which also includes trade in services.
higher than those recorded in 1998 (monthly average of $\$ 1.6$ billion).

## Exports slightly surpassed January's record level

Exports of energy products continued moving up ( $+8.7 \%$ in May) for the third consecutive month. Coal showed the sharpest increase, particularly exports to Japan and South Korea. This volume increase is mainly due to a timing effect, with most spring exports being registered to those countries in May. Crude oil exports increased for the fifth consecutive month, the result of higher prices caused by OPEC's successful supply controls.

Exports of agricultural and fishing products rose $6.4 \%$ in May; this gain was chiefly due to higher wheat and seafood exports. Two major factors explain the $35.6 \%$ increase in exports of wheat: higher exports to Algeria, Indonesia, Iran and Morocco, and lower American production for winter wheat, which was unable to meet strong U.S. demand. Strong demand in Japan and the United States for Canadian crab and lobster drove prices up over last year (over 50\% in the case of crab). However, canola exports fell in May, caused mainly by a lack of sales to China. Furthermore, the substitution of Canadian canola with canola from European Union countries significantly reduced Canadian exports to Mexico.

Automotive product exports continued inching up, mainly due to a $2.3 \%$ increase in exports of passenger cars. However, this advance was not sufficient to offset losses in April, and May exports of passenger cars were $\$ 300$ million lower ( $-3.8 \%$ ) than in March.

After a sharp increase in April, exports of forest product dropped in May. Although all sub-sectors fell, the largest drop was in exports of newsprint. The Canadian newsprint industry was operating at $88.0 \%$ capacity in May compared with $96.0 \%$ in May 1998.

This reduction reflected a surplus of newsprint on the market, which drove prices down.

Machinery and equipment exports fell in May for the second consecutive month. The sharp decline in aircraft exports drove down the entire sector after the record level reached in January.

## Imports remained stable

Imports have remained virtually unchanged since February, and in May were $\$ 300$ million lower ( $-1.2 \%$ ) than the record reached in December 1998. The strong recovery in imports of televisions, magazines and periodicals and automotive parts was almost completely offset by the sharp drop in imports of aircraft, oil, gold and primary steel products.

The machinery and equipment sector rose slightly in May. The upward trend in imports of computers and communication equipment was almost completely negated by the sharp drop in aircraft imports.

Automotive product imports remained relatively stable. The recovery in imports of automotive parts and passenger cars was neutralized by a sharp drop in truck imports. Strong Canadian car sales and increased production since the beginning of the year led to higher imports of cars ( $+16.7 \%$ ) and automotive parts ( $+12.0 \%$ ) compared with May 1998. However, truck imports were down 12.4\% compared with May last year.

After rising for three consecutive months, imports of energy products fell slightly in May, owing to the sharp decline of crude oil imports. This drop in volume coincided with high inventories and a slight increase in prices.

Imports of industrial products fell for the second consecutive month. The sector was driven down mainly
by two highly volatile series - gold and active agents used in the manufacture of medications.

## Revisions

In general, merchandise trade data are revised on an ongoing basis for each month of the current year. Factors influencing revisions include late receipt of import and export documentation, incorrect information on customs forms, replacement of estimates with actual figures (once available), changes in classification of merchandise based on more current information and seasonal adjustments. Consult the appropriate CANSIM matrices for revised data.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3618, 3619, 3651, 3685-3699, 3701-3711, 3713, 3720, 3887-3913, 8430-8435, 8438-8447.

This release contains a summary of the merchandise trade data to be published shortly in Canadian international merchandise trade (65-001-XPB, $\quad \$ 19 / \$ 188 ; \quad 65-001-X I B, \quad \$ 14 / \$ 141$ ). The publication will include tables by commodity and country on a customs basis. Current account data (which incorporate merchandise trade statistics, service transactions, investment income and transfers) are available quarterly in Canada's balance of international payments (67-001-XPB, $\$ 38 / \$ 124$ ). See How to order publications.

Readers may obtain merchandise trade data on a more timely basis by fax on the morning of release.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Jocelyne Elibani (613-951-9647; 1-800-294-5583), Marketing and Client Services Section, International Trade Division.

Merchandise trade of Canada

|  | $\begin{gathered} \hline \text { April } \\ 1999 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \hline \text { May } \\ 1999 \end{gathered}$ | April to May 1999 | $\begin{array}{r} \text { May } \\ 1998 \\ \text { to } \\ \text { May } \\ 1999 \end{array}$ | Jan. <br> to <br> May <br> 1998 | Jan. <br> to <br> May <br> 1999 | $\begin{array}{r} \hline \text { Jan.-May } \\ 1998 \\ \text { to } \\ \text { Jan.May } \\ 1999 \end{array}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | seasonally adjusted, \$ current |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | \$ mil |  | \% ch |  | \$ mi |  | \% change |
| Principal trading partners |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Exports |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| United States | 24,779 | 24,734 | -0.2 | 13.6 | 107,233 | 123,343 | 15.0 |
| Japan | 771 | 894 | 16.0 | 9.3 | 4,038 | 3,991 | -1.2 |
| European Union | 1,415 | 1,373 | -3.0 | -7.4 | 7,513 | 7,067 | -5.9 |
| Other OECD countries ${ }^{1}$ | 571 | 562 | -1.6 | -3.8 | 3,174 | 2,799 | -11.8 |
| All other countries | 1,227 | 1,330 | 8.4 | -16.2 | 8,338 | 6,711 | -19.5 |
| Total | 28,763 | 28,894 | 0.5 | 10.1 | 130,296 | 143,911 | 10.4 |
| Imports |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| United States | 20,296 | 20,291 | 0.0 | 5.6 | 94,796 | 101,424 | 7.0 |
| Japan | 845 | 889 | 5.2 | 6.9 | 4,040 | 4,183 | 3.5 |
| European Union | 2,154 | 2,189 | 1.6 | 3.7 | 10,326 | 10,952 | 6.1 |
| Other OECD countries ${ }^{1}$ | 1,029 | 1,021 | -0.8 | 13.4 | 4,610 | 5,041 | 9.3 |
| All other countries | 2,096 | 2,060 | -1.7 | 10.1 | 9,490 | 10,099 | 6.4 |
| Total | 26,420 | 26,450 | 0.1 | 6.1 | 123,261 | 131,699 | 6.8 |
| Balance |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| United States | 4,483 | 4,443 | ... | ... | 12,437 | 21,919 | ... |
| Japan | -74 | 5 | $\ldots$ | ... | -2 | -192 | ... |
| European Union | -739 | -816 | ... | ... | -2,813 | -3,885 | ... |
| Other OECD countries ${ }^{1}$ | -458 | -459 | ... | ... | -1,436 | -2,242 | ... |
| All other countries | -869 | -730 | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | -1,152 | -3,388 | ... |
| Total | 2,343 | 2,444 | ... | ... | 7,035 | 12,212 | ... |
| Principal commodity groupings |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Exports |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Agricultural and fishing products | 2,004 | 2,132 | 6.4 | 1.3 | 10,498 | 10,413 | -0.8 |
| Energy products | 2,275 | 2,474 | 8.7 | 21.2 | 9,831 | 10,292 | 4.7 |
| Forestry products | 3,261 | 3,159 | -3.1 | 10.8 | 14,404 | 15,727 | 9.2 |
| Industrial goods and materials | 4,529 | 4,549 | 0.4 | -6.2 | 24,086 | 22,993 | -4.5 |
| Machinery and equipment | 6,728 | 6,486 | -3.6 | -0.5 | 31,878 | 33,608 | 5.4 |
| Automotive products | 7,713 | 7,825 | 1.5 | 31.8 | 30,172 | 39,638 | 31.4 |
| Other consumer goods | 1,156 | 1,117 | -3.4 | 9.1 | 4,886 | 5,689 | 16.4 |
| Special transactions trade ${ }^{2}$ | 610 | 634 | 3.9 | 60.1 | 1,884 | 3,058 | 62.3 |
| Other balance-of-payment adjustments | 488 | 516 | 5.7 | -1.3 | 2,657 | 2,493 | -6.2 |
| Imports |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Agricultural and fishing products | 1,499 | 1,486 | -0.9 | 3.8 | 7,008 | 7,391 | 5.5 |
| Energy products | 817 | 808 | -1.1 | 9.0 | 3,804 | 3,584 | -5.8 |
| Forestry products | 231 | 220 | -4.8 | 2.3 | 1,016 | 1,106 | 8.9 |
| Industrial goods and materials | 5,027 | 4,970 | -1.1 | -0.2 | 24,677 | 25,128 | 1.8 |
| Machinery and equipment | 8,712 | 8,744 | 0.4 | 7.2 | 40,480 | 43,731 | 8.0 |
| Automotive products | 6,136 | 6,155 | 0.3 | 10.7 | 27,556 | 30,694 | 11.4 |
| Other consumer goods | 2,981 | 3,047 | 2.2 | 7.3 | 13,690 | 15,082 | 10.2 |
| Special transactions trade ${ }^{2}$ | 517 | 510 | -1.4 | -1.0 | 2,611 | 2,470 | -5.4 |
| Other balance-of-payment adjustments | 499 | 511 | 2.4 | 3.4 | 2,420 | 2,512 | 3.8 |

[^0]
## Wholesale trade

May 1999 (preliminary)
Wholesalers took a step forward in May, with sales rising $1.8 \%$ to $\$ 29.8$ billion after a slight decline in April. Except for a slowdown during the first half of 1998, sales have generally been climbing for the last three years. Gains this month were broadly based, with increases in nine of the 11 trade groups and seven of those nine having strong increases between 2.7\% and $4.7 \%$.


In percentage terms, the gains were led by wholesalers of apparel and dry goods, who posted a $4.7 \%$ increase over April, bringing their sales to $\$ 0.5$ billion. Notable increases were also recorded by wholesalers of lumber and building materials ( $+3.9 \%$ to $\$ 2.4$ billion), motor vehicles, parts and accessories ( $+3.6 \%$ to $\$ 5.4$ billion) and computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery (+3.6\% to $\$ 3.1$ billion).

With sales of $\$ 4.2$ billion, wholesalers of industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies posted a drop from April ( $-0.8 \%$ ). Sales of beverage, drug and tobacco products were down $0.4 \%$ in May to $\$ 1.9$ billion, a second consecutive decline. This drop was primarily due to weak sales in the drugs component. After a period of briskly expanding sales during all of 1997, sales for the beverage, drug and tobacco sector have been fairly stable since early 1998.

## Apparel and dry goods lead the way

The increase in sales for wholesalers of apparel and dry goods was sufficient to make up for the decline in April. Despite the month-to-month volatility in sales, the overall movement has been fairly flat since the spring of 1998, following two years of continuous expansion. Wholesalers within the men's and boys clothing sector reported a number of unusually large sales in May.

## Sales of lumber and building materials reach new heights

Wholesalers of lumber and building materials posted a $3.9 \%$ increase over April levels. Sales have generally been increasing since mid-1998, following a series of declines that started in the spring of 1997. The residential construction industry continued its strong pace south of the border and Canadian residential permits were up $6.2 \%$ in May. In addition, May saw increased prices for both lumber and oriented strandboard. For sales destined to the United States, the nearly $2.5 \%$ drop in the Canadian dollar during May may have helped wholesalers gain market share. Also, during May, the lumber suppliers were not yet restricted by their quarterly quota for the April to June period. Media reports about Canadian suppliers of wallboard, insulation and other building materials indicate that they were running at full capacity to keep abreast of demand.

## Industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies looking for a boost

Wholesalers of industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies saw their sales dip $0.8 \%$ in May. This sector had seen strong increases from early 1996 until the spring of 1998 . Since then, sales have generally remained flat. With commodity prices at low levels, wholesalers in this group are experiencing weak markets from clients in commodity-based industries. Wholesalers of business and office equipment also reported slow sales in May, which contributed to the overall decline. Signs of a recovery in Japan and neighbouring Asian countries may help this sector by increasing demand for commodities such as nickel, tin and aluminum.

## Strong growth on the coasts

Nine provinces had increased sales in May, with wholesalers in Newfoundland posting the largest percentage increase, up $7.1 \%$ over April. This further
bolsters the strong upward movement for sales by wholesalers in that province since mid-1998. The impending increase in production slated for Hibernia in the fall of 1999 may be contributing to this growth.


British Columbia wholesalers saw sales increase 3.5\% during May. The general level of sales had increased strongly in the second half of 1997 but, since then, increases and decreases have offset each other. In the midst of a quarter for lumber export quotas and of increasing lumber prices, lumber exports to supply the strong U.S. construction industry have likely contributed to the increase. British Columbia wholesalers may also be benefiting from signs of increased spending in the Pacific Rim, an important destination for resource exports.

Nova Scotia was the exception to the provinces in May, with wholesale sales declining $1.2 \%$. Sales in Nova Scotia, despite their drop this month, remain $13.7 \%$ higher than a year ago. Sales generally increased at a moderate pace from mid-1996 until the fall of 1997 at which point sales dipped slightly through to the fall of 1998. Since then, sales have generally been rising at a strong pace. A decline in sales of industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies contributed significantly to the province's overall sales drop in May.

## Wholesale inventories diminishing

Amidst healthy sales in May and a movement toward lower inventories generally, wholesalers reduced their inventories another $0.4 \%$. Since the beginning of 1999, the overall level of inventories held by wholesalers has been diminishing. The inventory to sales ratio has been dropping since mid-1998, declining to 1.35 in May.

## Available on CANSIM: matrices 59, 61, 648 and 649.

The May 1999 issue of Wholesale trade (63-008-XIB, $\$ 14 / \$ 140$ ) will be available shortly. See How to order publications.

For data or general information, contact the Client Services Unit (613-951-3549 or 1-877-421-3067; wholesaleinfo@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Greg Parsons (613-951-0062; parsons@statcan.ca), Wholesale Trade Section, Distributive Trades Division.

The Daily, July 20, 1999

Wholesale merchants' sales and inventories

|  | $\begin{gathered} \text { May } \\ 1998^{r} \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Feb. } \\ & 1999 \text { r } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} \hline \text { March } \\ 1999^{r} \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \hline \text { April } \\ 1999^{r} \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { May } \\ 1999^{\text { }} \end{gathered}$ | April to May 1999 | $\begin{array}{r} \text { May } \\ 1998 \\ \text { to } \\ \text { May } \\ 1999 \end{array}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | seasonally adjusted |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | \$ millions |  |  |  |  | \% change |  |
| Sales, all trade groups | 28,200 | 29,042 | 29,390 | 29,286 | 29,810 | 1.8 | 5.7 |
| Food products | 4,224 | 4,501 | 4,546 | 4,583 | 4,612 | 0.6 | 9.2 |
| Beverage, drug and tobacco products | 1,927 | 1,919 | 1,994 | 1,911 | 1,904 | -0.4 | -1.2 |
| Apparel and dry goods | 554 | 562 | 555 | 529 | 554 | 4.7 | 0.0 |
| Household goods | 801 | 795 | 789 | 801 | 823 | 2.7 | 2.7 |
| Motor vehicles, parts and accessories | 5,059 | 5,276 | 5,234 | 5,175 | 5,362 | 3.6 | 6.0 |
| Metals, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies | 1,920 | 1,936 | 1,954 | 1,955 | 2,022 | 3.5 | 5.3 |
| Lumber and building materials | 2,001 | 2,204 | 2,281 | 2,281 | 2,370 | 3.9 | 18.5 |
| Farm machinery, equipment and supplies | 748 | 774 | 793 | 795 | 817 | 2.8 | 9.3 |
| Industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies | 4,134 | 4,204 | 4,240 | 4,248 | 4,213 | -0.8 | 1.9 |
| Computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery | 2,552 | 2,947 | 3,033 | 3,034 | 3,144 | 3.6 | 23.2 |
| Other products | 4,279 | 3,924 | 3,971 | 3,973 | 3,989 | 0.4 | -6.8 |
| Sales by province and territory |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Newfoundland | 192 | 206 | 208 | 207 | 222 | 7.1 | 16.0 |
| Prince Edward Island | 54 | 49 | 50 | 49 | 50 | 2.0 | -8.0 |
| Nova Scotia | 545 | 558 | 562 | 627 | 619 | -1.2 | 13.7 |
| New Brunswick | 347 | 351 | 362 | 360 | 376 | 4.6 | 8.6 |
| Quebec | 5,577 | 5,954 | 6,053 | 6,046 | 6,133 | 1.4 | 10.0 |
| Ontario | 13,583 | 14,321 | 14,449 | 14,302 | 14,597 | 2.1 | 7.5 |
| Manitoba | 950 | 1,009 | 1,061 | 1,112 | 1,112 | 0.0 | 17.1 |
| Saskatchewan | 1,004 | 914 | 844 | 865 | 873 | 1.0 | -13.0 |
| Alberta | 2,768 | 2,603 | 2,645 | 2,612 | 2,614 | 0.1 | -5.5 |
| British Columbia | 3,153 | 3,051 | 3,129 | 3,082 | 3,188 | 3.5 | 1.1 |
| Yukon | 11 | 9 | 12 | 9 | 10 | 2.8 | -10.7 |
| Northwest Territories | .. | 15 | 12 | 13 | 13 | -2.4 | .. |
| Nunavut | .. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 6.1 | .. |
| Inventories, all trade groups | 39,652 | 40,728 | 40,920 | 40,354 | 40,176 | -0.4 | 1.3 |
| Food products | 2,607 | 2,660 | 2,682 | 2,666 | 2,712 | 1.7 | 4.0 |
| Beverage, drug and tobacco products | 2,167 | 2,251 | 2,251 | 2,255 | 2,257 | 0.1 | 4.2 |
| Apparel and dry goods | 1,191 | 1,240 | 1,240 | 1,242 | 1,216 | -2.1 | 2.1 |
| Household goods | 1,580 | 1,552 | 1,535 | 1,554 | 1,568 | 0.9 | -0.8 |
| Motor vehicles, parts and accessories | 5,664 | 5,788 | 5,858 | 5,862 | 5,701 | -2.7 | 0.7 |
| Metals, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies | 3,373 | 3,518 | 3,520 | 3,507 | 3,533 | 0.8 | 4.7 |
| Lumber and building materials | 3,551 | 3,549 | 3,590 | 3,584 | 3,554 | -0.8 | 0.1 |
| Farm machinery, equipment and supplies | 2,239 | 2,262 | 2,256 | 2,189 | 2,185 | -0.2 | -2.4 |
| Industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies | 9,758 | 9,929 | 10,089 | 9,876 | 9,888 | 0.1 | 1.3 |
| Computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery | 2,325 | 2,603 | 2,517 | 2,415 | 2,486 | 2.9 | 6.9 |
| Other products | 5,198 | 5,376 | 5,381 | 5,205 | 5,076 | -2.5 | -2.3 |

[^1]
## OTHER RELEASES

## Export and import price indexes

May 1999
Current- and fixed-weighted export and import price indexes $(1992=100)$ on a balance-of-payments basis are now available. Price indexes are listed from January 1992 to May 1999 for the five commodity sections and the major commodity groups ( 62 exports and 61 imports).

Current- and fixed-weighted U.S. price indexes (1992=100) are also available on a customs basis. Price indexes are listed from January 1992 to May 1999. Included with the U.S. commodity indexes are the 10 all-countries and U.S.-only standard international trade classification (SITC) section indexes.

Indexes for the five commodity sections and the major commodity groups are now available on a customs basis.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3618, 3619, 3651, 3685, 8430-8435 and 8438-8447.

The May 1999 issue of Canadian international merchandise trade (65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188; $65-001-\mathrm{XIB}, \quad \$ 14 / \$ 141$ ) will be available shortly. See How to order publications.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality for this release, contact Jocelyne Elibani (613-951-9647 or 1-800-294-5583), Marketing and Client Services Section, International Trade Division.

## Natural gas sales

May 1999 (preliminary)
Natural gas sales totalled 4390 million cubic metres in May, up $7.3 \%$ from May 1998. All three sectors (residential, commercial and industrial) recorded higher monthly sales. Sales to the industrial sectors (including direct sales) rose $5.4 \%$ from May 1998, the result of higher demand for natural gas by electric utilities.

Year-to-date sales to the end of May were up 6.8\% from the same period in 1998. Sales to the residential ( $+4.0 \%$ ) and commercial ( $+8.7 \%$ ) sectors increased largely because of the unseasonably cold weather in the first five months of 1999. Sales to the industrial sector, including direct sales, maintained strong growth, advancing $7.6 \%$ over the same period last year.

## Natural gas sales

|  | $\begin{gathered} \text { May } \\ 1999^{p} \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{array}{r} \text { May } \\ 1998 \end{array}$ | $\begin{array}{r} \text { May } \\ 1998 \\ \text { to } \\ \text { May } \\ 1999 \\ \hline \end{array}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | thousands of cubic metres |  | \% change |
| Natural gas sales | 4,390,011 | 4,091,143 | 7.3 |
| Residential | 724,992 | 638,195 | 13.6 |
| Commercial | 475,065 | 427,109 | 11.2 |
| Industrial | 1,547,981 | 1,649,860 | 4 |
| Direct | 1,641,973 | 1,375,979 |  |
|  |  | -date |  |
|  | 1999 ${ }^{\text {p }}$ | 1998 | $\begin{array}{r} 1998 \\ \text { to } \\ 1999 \end{array}$ |
|  | thousands of | metres | \% change |
| Natural gas sales | 33,503,539 | 31,362,587 | 6.8 |
| Residential | 8,485,720 | 8,159,198 | 4.0 |
| Commercial | 5,873,084 | 5,404,237 | 8.7 |
| Industrial | 8,990,177 | 9,475,482 | 76 |
| Direct | 10,154,558 | 8,323,670 |  |

p Preliminary figures.

## Available on CANSIM: matrices 1052-1055.

The May 1999 issue of Gas utilities (55-002-XPB, \$17/\$165) will be available in August. See How to order publications.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Gary Smalldridge (613-951-3567; smalgar@statcan.ca) or Tom Lewis (613-951-3596; talewis@statcan.ca), Energy Section, Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division.

## Construction Union Wage Rate Index June 1999

The Construction Union Wage Rate Index (including supplements) remained unchanged from May at 113.6 ( $1992=100$ ). This index increased $1.5 \%$ compared with June 1998.

Union wage rates are published for 16 trades in 20 metropolitan areas for both the basic rates and rates including selected supplementary payments. Indexes on a 1992=100 time base are calculated for
the same metropolitan areas and are published for those where a majority of trades are covered by current collective agreements.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 956, 958 and 9922-9927.

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

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

## Selected financial indexes

June 1999
June figures are now available for selected financial indexes including conventional mortgage rates, prime business lending rates, provincial bond yield averages and exchange rates on a 1992=100 time base.

## Available on CANSIM: matrix 9928.

These indexes will appear in the second quarter 1999 issue of Construction price statistics (62-007-XPB, \$24/\$79), available in September. See How to order publications.

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

## Construction-type plywood

May 1999
Canadian firms produced 164074 cubic metres of construction-type plywood in May, an increase of $30.7 \%$ from the 125510 cubic metres produced during May 1998.

January-to-May production totalled 798841 cubic metres, a $6.4 \%$ increase from the 750702 cubic metres produced during the same period in 1998.

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

The May 1999 issue of Construction-type plywood ( $35-001-\mathrm{XIB}, \$ 5 / \$ 47$ ) will be available shortly. See How to order publications.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Don Grant (613-951-5998), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division.

## Electric utility construction price indexes <br> 1997 (final) and 1998 (preliminary)

Construction costs for distribution systems installations increased $4.1 \%$ compared with 1997, mainly as a result of the increase in labour costs. The increase was driven by both the engineering ( $+9.7 \%$ ) and installation ( $+6.9 \%$ ) labour components. The increase in labour was slightly offset by the cost for overhead conductors, which decreased $5.4 \%$ in 1998. The finalized distribution systems total for 1997 increased moderately ( $+1.2 \%$ ) over 1996.

The transmission-line system series increased $4.6 \%$ in 1998, higher than the 1997 increase $(+1.9 \%)$. The transmission line component of this system increased $3.9 \%$ in 1998 and $2.1 \%$ in 1997. The substation series within the transmission-line system rose $5.0 \%$ in 1998 and $1.8 \%$ in 1997. The various labour series within the transmission-line system were the largest contributors to the increase of this model.

Note: Beginning with the 1998 annual data, the electric utility construction price indexes (EUCPI) (formerly CANSIM matrix 2022, 1986=100) will be available on a 1992=100 time base in CANSIM matrix 9936. In the past, the EUCPI series comprised five models of electric utility plant: distribution systems, transmission lines, transformer stations, hydro-electric generating stations and fossil-fuel fired generating stations. The new EUCPI series includes only two models of electric utility construction: distribution systems and transmission-line systems. The transmission-line systems model consists of the previously published transmission-lines and transformer-stations models. The other two models representing generating stations are no longer published but they are being produced for information purposes, with the data available on request on a cost-recovery basis. The 1992=100 series has weights based on the distribution of construction expenditures derived from projects constructed in the base period.

## Available on CANSIM: matrix 9936.

The second quarter 1999 issue of Construction price statistics ( $62-007-\mathrm{XPB}, \$ 24 / \$ 79$ ) will be available in September. See How to order publications.

For more 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, or Adrian Fisher (613-951-9612; fax: 613-951-2848; fishadr@statcan.ca).

## Available on CANSIM: matrices 5675-5677.

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## Stocks of frozen poultry meat

July 1, 1999 (preliminary)
Data for stocks of frozen poultry meat in cold storage on July 1, 1999 are now available.

## PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

## There are no publications released today.





[^0]:    ... Figures not appropriate or not applicable.
    1 Includes Australia, Iceland, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Poland, South Korea, Hungary and the Czech Republic.
    2 These are mainly low valued transactions, value of repairs to equipment, and goods returned to country of origin.

[^1]:    ${ }^{r}$ Revised figures.
    $p$ Preliminary figures.
    .. Figures not available.

