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The Daily

Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASES

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Building permits

August 2002

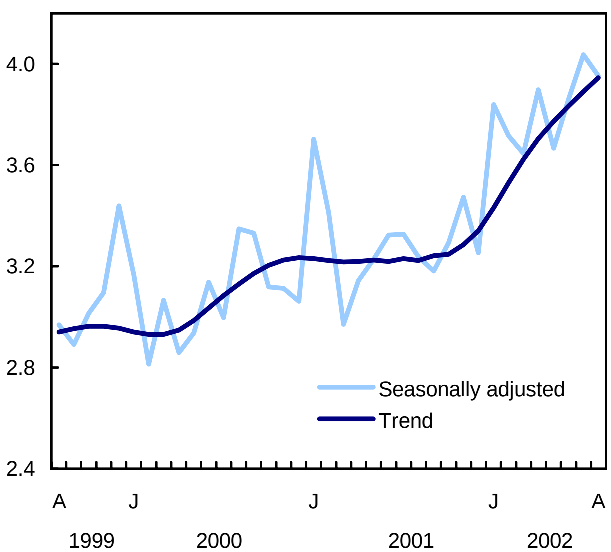
Builders took out $4.0 billion worth of building permits in August, down a slight 2.1% from the record reached in July. The continuous strength in the residential sector was behind this high level, as construction intentions in the non-residential sector retreated in August.

Municipalities issued $2.5 billion in housing permits in August, up 3.7% from July. This level is the second highest on record, surpassed only by last April's housing construction intentions, which reached $2.7 billion. In August, 19,000 new dwelling units were authorized. The strength came from both the multi- and single-family components.

Pulled down by double-digit drops in the three components — industrial, commercial and institutional — the value of non-residential permits dropped 10.9% to $1.4 billion in August. However, this decline came after three consecutive monthly gains.

Total value of permits remains high in August

$ billions



The total value of building permits reached $30.6 billion from January to August, up 16.2% from the same period last year. In 2001, this level was not reached until October. The impressive growth in the residential sector (+35.1%) fuelled this gain, as the cumulative value of non-residential permits fell 6.7% behind 2001.

> ***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 2,350 municipalities representing 95% of the population. It provides an early indication of building activity. The communities representing the other 5% of the population are very small, and their building activity has little impact on the total.*
>
> *The value of planned construction activities shown in this release excludes engineering projects (e.g., waterworks, sewers or culverts) and land.*

In the wake of a strong demand for new housing, Toronto and Montréal showed the largest growth (in dollars) cumulatively among the metropolitan areas. On a year-to-date basis, 24 out of the 28 metropolitan areas posted advances from 2001 for the total value of building permits, whereas all of them showed growths in terms of residential permits.

Increases in both single- and multi-family permits

Construction intentions for single- and multi-family dwellings both increased in August. The value of single-family permits (which represents nearly 70.0% of the residential component) rose 3.8% to $1.7 billion. Multi-family permits were up 3.3% to $791 million, fuelled by intentions to build new apartment units.

The low mortgage rates and their advantageous impact on housing affordability, the upward trend in employment since the start of 2002 and the low vacancy rates in several major centres are among the factors contributing to increased demand for new housing.

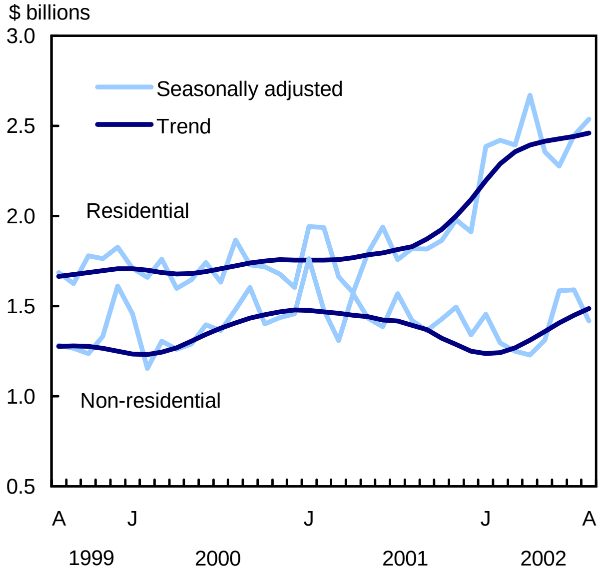
Provincially, the largest increase (in dollars) by far in August occurred in Ontario (+12.8% to $1.2 billion), as residential construction planned in the Toronto area drove the gain. In contrast, Alberta showed the largest decline, as residential permits went from $427 million in July to $362 million in August following strong construction intentions for multi-family dwellings in July.

For the first eight months of 2002, both single-family (+35.0%) and multi-family (+35.5%) permits were far ahead of the level for the same period of 2001. So far in 2002, 144,000 new units have been authorized

— 85,750 new single-family units and 58,250 new multi-family units.

All provinces and territories showed increases in residential permits on a year-to-date basis, the largest gains (in dollars) coming from Ontario and Quebec.

Residential and non-residential sectors move in opposite directions



Non-residential sector pulled down by declines in the three non-residential components

The value of the non-residential sector slid 10.9% in August, after three consecutive monthly increases.

After a 25.1% jump in July, industrial intentions fell 11.9% in August, the result of a decline in the transportation category. British Columbia recorded the largest decrease following a tremendous raise in July.

Commercial projects tumbled 10.6% to $666 million in August, the second monthly decrease in a row. The office building category showed the most significant loss, after a substantial increase in July. The largest decrease in this component occurred in Ontario.

The value of the institutional component dipped 10.9% to $474 million, pushed down by the medical and hospital category. Alberta recorded the most significant decrease after three monthly increases.

Industries raised their rates of capacity use for the second straight quarter from April to June on the heels of strong gains in manufacturing and forestry and logging. The two quarterly increases in the first half of 2002 followed a string of five consecutive declines. The capacity use recovery could have a positive impact on industrial construction intentions.

In addition, in early July, the manufacturing sector reported a positive economic outlook for the third quarter. Producers indicated that inventories were under control and orders were still coming in, according to the latest Quarterly Business Conditions Survey.

Provincially, Alberta recorded the largest decrease in the non-residential sector (-26.3% to $181 million), the result of declines in manufacturing buildings and educational projects. In contrast, gains in commercial and institutional components led Quebec to the strongest increase.

Of the 28 census metropolitan areas, 16 recorded monthly decreases in the value of non-residential permits. By far, the largest decline occurred in the Toronto area as a result of a large decline in the office building category.

Municipalities issued $11.1 billion in permits for the non-residential sector from January to the end of August, down 6.7% from the same period of 2001.

This strong decline was mainly the result of decreases in industrial (-8.8%) and commercial (-11.8%) construction intentions. Only the institutional (+5.1%) component showed an increase on a year-to-date basis.

Among the provinces, the largest decline was recorded in British Columbia (-26.3% to $1.2 billion); Ontario recorded the largest increase (+4.0% to $5.1 billion).

Available on CANSIM: tables 026-0001 to 026-0008, 026-0010 and 026-0015.

Information on methods and data quality available in the Integrated Meta Data Base: survey number 2802.

The August 2002 issue of *Building permits* (64-001-XIE, $14/$145) will be available soon. See *How to order products*.

The September 2002 building permit estimate will be released on November 6.

For general information or to order data, contact Vere Clarke (1-800-579-8533; 613-951-6556; *clarver@statcan.ca*). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Étienne Saint-Pierre (613-951-2025; *saineti@statcan.ca*), Investment and Capital Stock Division. □

Value of building permits

Census metropolitan area	July 2002[r]	August 2002[p]	July to August 2002	January to August 2001	January to August 2002	January–August 2001 to January–August 2002
	Seasonally adjusted					
	$ millions		% change	$ millions		% change
St. John's	26.3	17.7	-32.5	124.0	168.2	35.7
Halifax	55.9	28.6	-48.8	219.0	308.8	41.0
Saint John	12.2	8.7	-28.7	56.2	64.4	14.7
Chicoutimi–Jonquière	10.7	11.2	4.3	121.8	112.3	-7.8
Québec	79.7	61.2	-23.3	490.5	472.4	-3.7
Sherbrooke	12.2	18.1	48.2	95.6	148.3	55.1
Trois-Rivières	16.7	17.2	2.7	79.7	107.1	34.5
Montréal	389.4	453.9	16.6	2,750.0	3,077.8	11.9
Hull	60.4	30.3	-49.7	242.0	318.2	31.5
Ottawa	232.1	124.4	-46.4	1,057.4	1,169.6	10.6
Kingston	13.8	31.9	130.7	122.7	195.1	59.0
Oshawa	79.4	89.8	13.2	381.8	486.6	27.4
Toronto	740.2	902.0	21.8	5,566.7	6,024.0	8.2
Hamilton	118.5	115.2	-2.8	583.3	769.5	31.9
St. Catharines–Niagara	25.0	73.5	194.5	252.1	518.3	105.6
Kitchener	96.0	82.3	-14.3	617.3	699.3	13.3
London	62.7	69.4	10.7	476.9	467.7	-1.9
Windsor	59.9	49.3	-17.7	369.0	496.3	34.5
Sudbury	12.0	9.7	-19.0	51.8	100.1	93.3
Thunder Bay	9.5	7.9	-16.7	73.3	135.2	84.4
Winnipeg	38.8	45.1	16.0	295.1	309.7	4.9
Regina	10.7	11.5	6.8	137.2	93.5	-31.8
Saskatoon	28.2	24.6	-12.7	166.8	212.4	27.3
Calgary	246.5	200.3	-18.7	1,477.9	1,800.2	21.8
Edmonton	164.0	178.4	8.7	833.0	1,129.7	35.6
Abbotsford	21.8	10.4	-52.6	102.5	110.7	8.1
Vancouver	267.8	258.5	-3.5	2,102.7	2,269.6	7.9
Victoria	33.7	31.3	-7.1	219.4	296.1	34.9

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

Value of building permits

	July 2002[r]	August 2002[p]	July to August 2002	January to August 2001	January to August 2002	January–August 2001 to January–August 2002
	Seasonally adjusted					
	$ millions		% change	$ millions		% change
Canada	**4,037.3**	**3,953.4**	**-2.1**	**26,351.4**	**30,617.7**	**16.2**
Residential	2,446.8	2,536.8	3.7	14,422.8	19,486.2	35.1
Non-residential	1,590.5	1,416.6	-10.9	11,928.7	11,131.4	-6.7
Newfoundland and Labrador	51.1	26.9	-47.3	207.0	255.0	23.2
Residential	19.2	20.2	5.3	117.3	157.6	34.3
Non-residential	32.0	6.8	-78.8	89.7	97.4	8.6
Prince Edward Island	12.1	15.5	28.6	147.7	95.9	-35.1
Residential	7.6	13.2	73.0	43.6	68.2	56.5
Non-residential	4.5	2.4	-47.1	104.1	27.6	-73.5
Nova Scotia	90.7	58.2	-35.8	470.1	576.6	22.7
Residential	54.8	40.0	-27.0	299.1	402.9	34.7
Non-residential	35.9	18.2	-49.3	171.0	173.7	1.6
New Brunswick	64.2	64.3	0.1	343.2	465.6	35.7
Residential	28.0	32.1	14.6	180.1	273.2	51.6
Non-residential	36.2	32.2	-11.1	163.1	192.5	18.0
Quebec	745.2	775.1	4.0	4,979.2	5,762.6	15.7
Residential	485.5	480.1	-1.1	2,319.8	3,481.5	50.1
Non-residential	259.7	294.9	13.6	2,659.4	2,281.1	-14.2
Ontario	1,786.1	1,896.2	6.2	11,967.2	14,048.3	17.4
Residential	1,065.1	1,201.5	12.8	7,098.3	8,982.5	26.5
Non-residential	721.0	694.7	-3.6	4,868.9	5,065.8	4.0
Manitoba	84.8	69.4	-18.1	488.3	607.0	24.3
Residential	36.3	35.2	-2.8	221.4	299.4	35.2
Non-residential	48.5	34.2	-29.5	267.0	307.7	15.2
Saskatchewan	60.5	53.6	-11.5	468.8	471.1	0.5
Residential	21.1	28.7	36.0	144.2	173.7	20.5
Non-residential	39.4	24.8	-37.0	324.6	297.5	-8.4
Alberta	672.8	543.0	-19.3	3,743.0	4,554.3	21.7
Residential	427.1	361.9	-15.3	2,114.7	3,068.4	45.1
Non-residential	245.7	181.1	-26.3	1,628.3	1,485.9	-8.7
British Columbia	449.9	429.2	-4.6	3,423.6	3,668.0	7.1
Residential	284.4	309.3	8.8	1,846.7	2,506.5	35.7
Non-residential	165.5	119.9	-27.6	1,576.9	1,161.4	-26.3
Yukon	3.4	3.6	4.8	41.1	19.3	-53.0
Residential	2.4	1.7	-30.3	11.9	14.2	19.5
Non-residential	1.0	1.9	89.2	29.2	5.1	-82.4
Northwest Territories	7.9	11.0	39.3	46.4	58.9	27.1
Residential	6.9	6.4	-8.1	13.7	39.6	189.8
Non-residential	0.9	4.6	395.6	32.7	19.3	-41.0
Nunavut	8.6	7.5	-13.1	26.0	35.0	34.4
Residential	8.4	6.6	-22.1	12.1	18.5	52.8
Non-residential	0.2	0.9	426.6	13.9	16.5	18.3

r *Revised data.*
p *Preliminary data.*
Note: *Data may not add to totals because of rounding.*

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NEW PRODUCTS

Gross domestic product by industry, July 2002, Vol. 16, no. 7
Catalogue number 15-001-XIE ($11/$110).

Rural and small town Canada analysis bulletin, Vol. 4, no. 1
Catalogue number 21-006-XIE
(free).

Industry price indexes, July 2002, Vol. 28, no. 7
Catalogue number 62-011-XPB ($22/$217).

Restaurant, caterer and tavern statistics, July 2002, Vol. 34, no. 7
Catalogue number 63-011-XIE ($6/$55).

All prices are in Canadian dollars and exclude sales tax. Additional shipping charges apply for delivery outside Canada.

Catalogue numbers with an -XIB or an -XIE extension are Internet versions; those with -XMB or -XME are microfiche; -XPB or -XPE are paper versions; -XDB are electronic versions on diskette and -XCB are electronic versions on compact disc.

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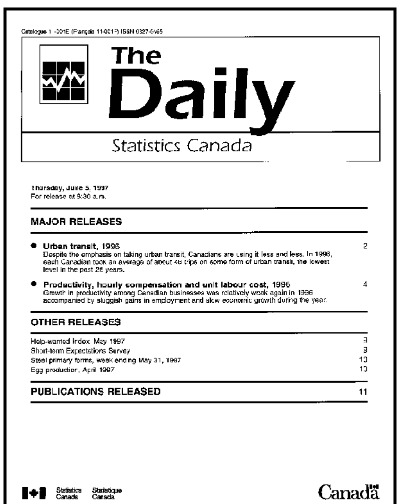
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Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 5, 1997
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- **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 45 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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