



The Daily

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Over the past 30 years, the population of British Columbia's Okanagan-Similkameen river basin has more than doubled, the fastest growth rate among the 23 major river basins in Canada. However, this scenic region in the B.C. Interior also has one of Canada's lowest renewable supplies of fresh water.

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NEW PRODUCTS



MAJOR RELEASES

Human activity and the environment: Annual statistics

2003

Over the past 30 years, the population of British Columbia's Okanagan-Similkameen river basin has more than doubled, the fastest growth rate among the 23 major river basins in Canada. However, this scenic region in the British Columbia interior also has one of Canada's lowest renewable supplies of fresh water.

The Okanagan-Similkameen basin has only 0.1% of the country's renewable supply of fresh water. In comparison, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin has 6.8% of the renewable supply of fresh water, the Pacific Coastal basin has 15.8%, and the Northern Quebec basin has 16.0%.

From 1971 to 2001, the population of the Okanagan-Similkameen basin increased 137% to 285,145.

The impact of this strong growth in population can also be examined on the basis of two other indicators: the number of people for every square kilometer of land, and the number for every square km of surface water.

In 2001, the Okanagan-Similkameen river basin ranked first in Canada in terms of the number of people for each square km of surface water, and second only to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence river basin in terms of population density for every square km of land.

The Okanagan-Similkameen river basin had nearly 439 people for every square km of surface water. This was well ahead of its closest rival, the South Saskatchewan River basin, which had almost 284 people for every square km. British Columbia's Fraser River valley was a close third, with 224. The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin, the most populated basin in Canada, had only 131 people for every square km of water.

In terms of land, an average of just over 30 people lived in every square km of land in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence river basin in 2001, the highest ratio in Canada. The Okanagan-Similkameen river basin was in second place with about 18 people for every square km of land.

The study "Fresh water resources in Canada" is published in the 2003 edition of *Human activity and the environment: Annual statistics*, Statistics Canada's latest compilation of annual environmental statistics. It is a portrait of the nation's environment with emphasis on human activity and its impacts.

This publication includes 71 data tables on topics ranging from Canada's physiography to the production of waste.

Canadians among world's biggest consumers of water

While Canada has one of the largest renewable supplies of fresh water in the world, Canadians are also among the highest consumers of water in terms of per capita use, the study reported.

Most recent statistics from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) show that in 1999, each Canadian on average used 1,471 cubic metres of water. Among OECD member countries, Canada was second only to the United States, where each American used 1,870 cubic metres.

The study pointed out that some of Canada's fresh water resources are being threatened. Since 1850, some 1,300 glaciers have lost between 25% and 75% of their mass, with most of this reduction occurring in the last 50 years. Along the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains, glacier cover is receding rapidly, and total cover is now close to its lowest level in 10,000 years.

The navigability of the St. Lawrence Seaway is at risk because of low water levels. In the early part of the 1900s, water levels in the port of Montréal averaged two metres above the long-term average low-water mark. At the turn of the millennium, this margin had declined to less than one metre.

From 1995 to 2000, the supply of bottled water increased 61%. In 1995, each Canadian consumed 17.9 litres of bottled water. Five years later, that number had jumped to 27.6 litres.

Constant threats to water quality

Despite considerable efforts to curb pollution, water quality is still a major concern for Canadians.

Many municipalities have been forced to issue boil-water orders. Agricultural run-off has contaminated drinking water supplies, as in the case of Walkerton, Ontario, and industries discharge hundreds of different substances into rivers and lakes daily. In 2001, more than 2,600 industrial facilities reported chemical discharges to water bodies.

The study pointed to some specific problem areas. Many municipal water and wastewater treatment facilities are aging, and the growing population is adding stress to these facilities. In 1997, the Canadian Water

and Wastewater Association estimated that \$5.4 billion in additional investment would be required each year from 1997 to 2012 to modernize and improve all water and wastewater treatment plants.

Most Canadians get their drinking water from municipal treatment plants. However, millions of people still rely on shallow ground water resources, which are generally safe but have a higher risk of exposure to contaminants. In 2001, 64% of Canadian farmers who relied on their own wells did not have their water supply tested regularly. Only 16% did so once a year.

Ammonia and nitrogen represented over 94% of the total industrial discharges into water in 2001. Ammonia alone accounted for almost one-half of the pollutants released into the Fraser River in British Columbia, and 42% of the pollutants discharged into Lake Ontario.

Landfills can be a potential source of ground water contamination. In 2000, less than one-half of the active landfills in Canada contained some type of liner. However, on the plus side, these landfills accepted 77% of the waste disposed that year. This reflects the trend toward large, regional landfills that have been better engineered than their predecessors.

Similarly, while only 18% of active landfills had a collection system for leachate, which is water that is polluted while seeping through a landfill, these facilities handled three-quarters of the waste disposed.

Quick glance: Other environmental highlights

In addition to the article on water, this issue of *Human activity and the environment: Annual statistics*

also provides a comprehensive assessment of how Canadians are interacting with the environment. It includes data on a variety of topics, such as natural resources, ecosystems and environmental practices.

In 2000, the waste management industry in Canada handled 7.5 million tonnes of materials for recycling or re-use. The majority of this material was generated by two provinces: Quebec (37%) and Ontario (32%).

From 1989 to 2003, Canada's total protected land area increased from 29 million hectares to 82 million hectares.

In 2000, Canadian industries spent more than \$3 billion on environmental protection. This marked the first time since 1995 that spending had surpassed the \$3-billion mark.

In 1961, resource-based industries dominated Canada's exports, accounting for two-thirds of goods and services sent abroad. By 1999, however, this group of industries represented less than one-third of the value of exports.

The publication *Human activity and the environment: Annual statistics 2003* (16-201-XIE, \$22) is now available. A paper version (16-201-XPE, \$43, including CD-ROM) will be available soon. See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts methods or data quality of this release, contact Murray Cameron (613-951-3740; fax: 613-951-0634; camemur@statcan.ca), Environment Accounts and Statistics Division. ■

OTHER RELEASES

Computer and Peripherals Price Indexes

January 1990 to September 2003 (preliminary)

The Computer and Peripherals Price Indexes (CPPI) are monthly series measuring changes over time in the price of computers and computer peripherals sold to governments, businesses and consumers. The methodology for producing these series employs the hedonic method, the result being an index series that tracks pure price change.

These series are being made available to the public in CANSIM for the first time. Until now, they have served as inputs into other Statistics Canada series including the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the Machinery and Equipment Price Index (MEPI), which is used by the Canadian System of National Accounts in deflating the value of gross investment by the business and government sectors.

In addition to deflation, the CPPI series can be used by economists, industry analysts and the general public to track and comprehend events and trends in this important contributor to the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector and to account for the continual quality change associated with this group of goods.

Historically, these constant-quality series all exhibit a strong downward trend, reflecting in part the improvements in quality and technology. Prices for commercial computers, that is, those computers sold typically to governments and businesses and comprising of desktops, portables and servers, fell at an average annual rate of 20.2% from 1990 to 2002. From 1996 to 2002, desktops declined at a rate of 19.7% annually, while portables fell 28.6% annually. The price for servers decreased 10.9% from 2001 to 2002.

Consumer computers, representing computer brands and models normally purchased by consumers and small businesses (desktops and portables), fell 36.3% from 2001 to 2002, with desktops declining 33.4% and portables falling 39.6%.

In the case of computer peripherals, the price of printers (inkjet, laser and dot matrix) has been declining an average of 10.9% per year from 1990 to 2002. Monitors have become cheaper as well, as the price fell 8.0% from 2001 to 2002.

These indexes are available at the Canada level only.

Available on CANSIM: tables 331-0001 and 331-0002.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5032.

For more information, contact Client Services (1-866-230-2248; 613-951-9606; infounit@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Fred Barzyk (613-951-2493; fred.barzyk@statcan.ca), Prices Division. ■

Fixed assets

2003

By the end of 2003, the country will have nearly \$2.5 trillion in structures and equipment in use to produce goods and services in the economy. This represents an increase (in real terms) of 30% over the last 10 years.

About two-thirds of this total consists of building and engineering structures, while about one-third comprises machinery and equipment.

Growth has been particularly strong in machinery and equipment assets, which will amount to an estimated \$841.3 billion by the end of 2003, a 69% increase during the past decade.

Fixed assets

2003

| | Building and engineering structures | Machinery and equipment | Total |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| \$ billions constant 1997 | | | |
| Total | 1,642.3 | 841.3 | 2,483.6 |
| Business sector | 1,111.8 | 770.0 | 1,881.8 |
| Public administration, education and health and social assistance | 530.5 | 71.3 | 601.8 |

In manufacturing, however, investment adding to productive capacity stopped growing in 2001. New investment has not been keeping pace with depreciation, as shown by the ratio of new investment to depreciation. This trend has been more evident in recent years.

Even with manufacturers increasing their investments in 2003, their levels of assets are still only in the neighbourhood of 1995 levels.

Ratio of Investment to Depreciation in Manufacturing

| | Investment | Depreciation | Ratio |
|------|---------------------------|--------------|-------|
| | \$ billions constant 1997 | | |
| 1993 | 13.4 | 16.1 | 0.83 |
| 1994 | 15.7 | 16.2 | 0.97 |
| 1995 | 17.6 | 16.5 | 1.07 |
| 1996 | 18.6 | 16.8 | 1.11 |
| 1997 | 20.8 | 17.2 | 1.21 |
| 1998 | 21.0 | 17.7 | 1.19 |
| 1999 | 21.2 | 18.2 | 1.16 |
| 2000 | 21.9 | 18.7 | 1.17 |
| 2001 | 18.2 | 19.1 | 0.95 |
| 2002 | 16.1 | 19.3 | 0.83 |
| 2003 | 17.0 | 19.3 | 0.88 |

To better prepare themselves for possible stronger demand and fiercer international competition, manufacturers will have to accelerate investment, especially in new machinery and equipment that embeds the newest technology.

Note: These series are presented on the basis of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS Canada 1997). At this time, we have both current and constant dollar series available. The series using a chain Fisher Formula will be available on December 10, 2003.

Available on CANSIM: table 031-0002.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2820.

To order data, contact Flo Magmanlac (613-951-2765). For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Richard Landry (613-951-2579), Investment and Capital Stock Division. ■

Participation and Activity Limitation Survey 2001

Data on underlying conditions of disability, cause of condition, perception of general health, and leisure and recreation are now available for children and adults with disabilities. Age condition suspected and diagnosed, education and child care arrangements are available for children. Age of onset of disability is available for adults.

Some 2001 Census data are also now available from the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) database.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3251.

A report entitled *Disability in Canada: A 2001 profile*, produced by Human Resources Development Canada using all PALS releases to date, is available on the Office for Disability Issues' website (www.drhc-hrhc.gc.ca/bcph-odi/).

For more information on the HRDC report, contact John Rietschlin (819-934-1199), Human Resources Development Canada. For more information on PALS, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality, contact Behnaz Behnia (613-951-4366; behnaz.behnia@statcan.ca) or Lucie Cossette (613-951-0876), Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division. ■

Electric power statistics

September 2003

Data on electric power are now available for September.

Available on CANSIM: table 127-0001.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2151.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; energ@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Sawmills and planing mills

September 2003

Data on sawmills and planing mills are now available for September.

Available on CANSIM: table 303-0009.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2134 and 2135.

The September 2003 issue of *Sawmills and planing mills*, Vol. 57, no. 9 (35-003-XIB, \$10/\$93) is now available. See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (1-866-873 8789; 613-951-9497; manufact@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

NEW PRODUCTS

Human activity and the environment: annual statistics,
Catalogue number 16-201-XIE (\$22).

Employment, earnings and hours, September 2003,
 Vol. 81, no. 9
Catalogue number 72-002-XIB (\$26/\$257).

Sawmills and planing mills, September 2003, Vol. 57,
 no. 9
Catalogue number 35-003-XIB (\$10/\$93).

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

Service bulletin: Surface and marine transport,
 Vol. 19, no. 2
Catalogue number 50-002-XIB (\$11).

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 or -XDE are electronic versions on diskette and -XCB or -XCE are electronic versions on compact disc.

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