



The Daily

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MAJOR RELEASES

- **Retail trade, September 2004** 2
Total spending in retail stores advanced for a fifth consecutive month in September. Retailers sold \$29.1 billion worth of goods and services, up 0.2% from August when sales rose 0.7%.
 - **Survey of Suppliers of Business Financing, 2003** 6
Canadian businesses reduced their total debt owed to major suppliers of financing for a third consecutive year. These suppliers reported their business clients owed them \$361.1 billion as of December 31, 2003, down slightly from the previous year.
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OTHER RELEASES

Local government business enterprise finance, fiscal year ended nearest to December 31, 2002	8
Steel wire and specified wire products, September 2004	8
Steel primary forms, weekly data, week ending November 13, 2004	8
Mineral wool including fibrous glass insulation, October 2004	9
Steel pipe and tubing, September 2004	9

NEW PRODUCTS 10



Statistics
Canada

Statistique
Canada

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MAJOR RELEASES

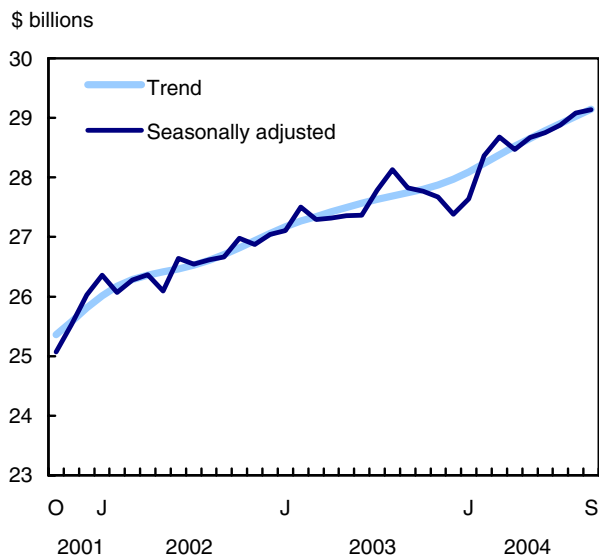
Retail trade

September 2004

Total spending in retail stores advanced for a fifth consecutive month in September. Retailers sold \$29.1 billion worth of goods and services, up 0.2% from August when sales rose 0.7%.

Retailers have enjoyed steady sales increases since the beginning of 2004, with the exception of a 0.7% decline in April. Successive increases in retail sales led to advances of 1.4% in both the second and third quarter of 2004, which followed a 2.3% jump in the first quarter. Prior to 2004, retail sales had declined in each of the last four months of 2003, after generally increasing since the fall of 2001.

Retail sales up for a fifth consecutive month



Consumers increased their spending in six of the eight retail sectors in September, while cutting back on their purchases in the automotive (-1.0%) and building and outdoor home supplies (-0.5%) sectors. In fact, retail sales advanced by at least 1.1% in four retail sectors: clothing (+1.4%), furniture (+1.3%), food (+1.1%) and the miscellaneous sector (+1.1%). The miscellaneous sector includes retailers such as office supply, sporting goods, hobby, music and book stores. Sales increases were moderate in pharmacies (+0.5%) and general merchandise stores (+0.2%).

Excluding sales by dealers of new, used and recreational vehicles and auto parts, retail sales increased 0.6% in September, after advancing 0.9% in August.

Overall, prices had little impact on September's growth, as retail sales increased 0.2% in constant dollars. This was the seventh monthly gain in retail sales, adjusted for price changes, since the start of 2004. The only declines this year occurred in April (-0.8%) and May (-0.2%).

Clothing stores show new sales strength

Consumers were back shopping in clothing and accessories stores in September, pushing sales up 1.4% compared with August, when sales fell 1.3%. In spite of unfavourable weather conditions since the spring, clothing and accessories stores managed to post a 1.1% sales gain in the third quarter of 2004, after a slight decline in the second quarter (-0.2%).

Retailers in the furniture, home furnishings and electronics sector enjoyed their third consecutive monthly sales gain in September (+1.3%), after experiencing a period of slow growth that began in the summer of 2003. Despite falling prices, the sales value in the overall sector advanced 2.4% in the third quarter, thanks to higher sales volumes across the board; in furniture stores, home furnishing stores, computer stores and home electronics and appliance stores.

Food and beverage retailers posted their third straight monthly sales gain in September (+1.1%), leading to a 1.7% increase in the third quarter. The beer, wine and liquor stores category, stimulated by higher sales to other retail establishments, posted the most significant advance in September (+3.7%). Supermarkets, for their part, saw their sales jump 1.1%. Growth in consumer spending in supermarkets has accelerated since the spring, resulting in healthy gains of 1.4% in the second quarter and 1.6% in the third quarter.

Pharmacies and personal care stores saw their sales rise more moderately in September (+0.5%), following a 1.6% jump in August. Sales in these stores have been rising rapidly since the start of 2003.

Sales in the general merchandise sector rose by a slim 0.2% in September, after remaining unchanged in August. Both department stores and the other general merchandise stores posted little sales growth in the last two months. The general merchandise sector showed essentially flat sales since the spring of 2004, after a period of rising sales that began in early 2003.

Lower sales in the automotive and building supplies sectors

Retailers in the automotive sector reported a 1.0% sales decline in September, their largest loss in five months. Lower sales at used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers (-1.3%) and new car dealers (-1.2%), in tandem with price-induced declines at gasoline stations (-0.5%), were behind this drop.

Despite September's decline, sales in the automotive sector advanced 1.0% in the third quarter, with mixed results in the different store types. Sales at new car dealers advanced 1.9% in the third quarter, but sales fell 2.1% at used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers. Gasoline stations saw little change in their sales in the third quarter (+0.3%), after posting price-induced jumps of about 6.0% in the first two quarters of 2004.

Shoppers reduced their spending by 0.5% in building and outdoor home supplies stores in September, on the heels of four strong monthly gains. Consequently, sales in this sector advanced 5.8% in the third quarter, leading all other retailers in terms of growth. Sales at building and outdoor home supplies stores have been advancing at an astonishing rate since the fall of 2001, with the exception of a slowdown in the last three months of 2003.

Alberta retailers outperform others

Retail sales advanced in seven provinces in September, with Alberta retailers leading the way. September's retail sales growth was strongest in Alberta (+1.8%), British Columbia (+1.4%) and New Brunswick (+1.4%). On the other hand, retail sales declined in Saskatchewan (-1.0%), Ontario (-0.6%) and Quebec (-0.3%).

The third quarter was particularly beneficial to retailers in Alberta, British Columbia and Quebec,

where retail sales advanced by 1.8% in each province. Retail sales in Ontario (+1.5%) and New Brunswick (+1.4%) were also up significantly in the third quarter. As for retailers in the remaining provinces, they reported lower sales or little change.

Related indicators for October

Total employment continued to advance in October (+0.2%), following a 0.3% rise in September. Previously, job creation had remained essentially unchanged in July and August. Housing starts fell for a second consecutive month in October (-5.4%), but remained at high levels. The number of new motor vehicles sold in October jumped by about 7% compared with September, according to early figures from the auto industry.

Available on CANSIM: tables 080-0014 to 080-0017 and 076-0005.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2406 and 2408.

The September 2004 issue of *Retail Trade* (63-005-XIE, \$18/\$166) will soon be available.

Data on retail trade for October 2004 will be released on December 21.

For more information or to order data, contact Client Services (1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; retailinfo@statcan.ca). For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Paul Gratton (613-951-3541), Distributive Trades Division.

□

Retail sales

	September 2003	June 2004 ^r	July 2004 ^r	August 2004 ^r	September 2004 ^p	August to September 2004	September 2003 to September 2004
seasonally adjusted							
	\$ millions				% change		
Automotive	9,336	9,692	9,674	9,728	9,631	-1.0	3.2
New car dealers	5,679	5,697	5,784	5,768	5,702	-1.2	0.4
Used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	1,182	1,210	1,178	1,204	1,189	-1.3	0.6
Gasoline stations	2,475	2,785	2,713	2,755	2,740	-0.5	10.7
Furniture, home furnishings and electronics stores	1,943	1,977	2,008	2,038	2,065	1.3	6.3
Furniture stores	668	678	696	709	726	2.4	8.7
Home furnishings stores	338	368	374	378	381	0.6	12.7
Computer and software stores	162	147	151	160	152	-4.9	-6.6
Home electronics and appliance stores	775	784	787	791	807	2.0	4.1
Building and outdoor home supplies stores	1,779	1,724	1,751	1,836	1,827	-0.5	2.7
Home centres and hardware stores	1,409	1,332	1,351	1,443	1,442	0.0	2.4
Specialized building materials and garden stores	370	392	399	394	385	-2.3	4.0
Food and beverage stores	6,458	6,767	6,799	6,845	6,923	1.1	7.2
Supermarkets	4,684	4,866	4,900	4,901	4,956	1.1	5.8
Convenience and specialty food stores	706	749	740	768	746	-2.8	5.7
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,068	1,152	1,159	1,177	1,220	3.7	14.2
Pharmacies and personal care stores	1,810	1,915	1,888	1,918	1,927	0.5	6.5
Clothing and accessories stores	1,634	1,668	1,695	1,673	1,697	1.4	3.8
Clothing stores	1,222	1,266	1,297	1,276	1,296	1.6	6.1
Shoe, clothing accessories and jewellery stores	412	401	398	396	400	1.0	-2.8
General merchandise stores	3,363	3,474	3,527	3,527	3,533	0.2	5.0
Department stores	1,749	1,800	1,848	1,844	1,846	0.1	5.5
Other general merchandise stores	1,614	1,674	1,678	1,684	1,687	0.2	4.5
Miscellaneous retailers	1,501	1,535	1,539	1,519	1,536	1.1	2.3
Sporting goods, hobby, music and book stores	738	732	742	745	746	0.2	1.1
Miscellaneous store retailers	763	803	797	775	790	1.9	3.5
Total retail sales	27,824	28,752	28,880	29,084	29,137	0.2	4.7
Total excluding new car dealers, used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	20,963	21,845	21,919	22,112	22,246	0.6	6.1
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland and Labrador	476	467	462	465	471	1.2	-1.2
Prince Edward Island	117	115	110	112	113	1.1	-3.0
Nova Scotia	816	867	854	852	858	0.7	5.1
New Brunswick	647	646	653	661	670	1.4	3.6
Quebec	6,328	6,534	6,566	6,612	6,595	-0.3	4.2
Ontario	10,587	10,627	10,653	10,850	10,781	-0.6	1.8
Manitoba	923	985	982	979	984	0.5	6.6
Saskatchewan	850	858	860	854	845	-1.0	-0.6
Alberta	3,296	3,636	3,672	3,657	3,721	1.8	12.9
British Columbia	3,684	3,919	3,970	3,946	4,001	1.4	8.6
Yukon	36	35	35	36	35	-2.1	-2.4
Northwest Territories	44	44	43	44	44	-1.1	-1.3
Nunavut	21	19	19	18	19	6.8	-7.6

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.

Retail sales

	September 2003	August 2004 ^r	September 2004 ^p	September 2003 to September 2004
unadjusted				
	\$ millions			% change
Automotive	9,613	10,221	9,943	3.4
New car dealers	5,864	5,924	5,890	0.4
Used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	1,186	1,283	1,196	0.9
Gasoline stations	2,563	3,014	2,857	11.5
Furniture, home furnishings and electronics stores	1,944	2,026	2,072	6.6
Furniture stores	682	746	749	9.8
Home furnishings stores	339	374	379	11.7
Computer and software stores	173	151	160	-7.6
Home electronics and appliance stores	750	755	783	4.5
Building and outdoor home supplies stores	1,799	1,955	1,980	10.1
Home centres and hardware stores	1,398	1,524	1,557	11.4
Specialized building materials and garden stores	401	430	423	5.6
Food and beverage stores	6,157	6,886	6,852	11.3
Supermarkets	4,468	4,801	4,923	10.2
Convenience and specialty food stores	694	807	748	7.9
Beer, wine and liquor stores	996	1,277	1,181	18.6
Pharmacies and personal care stores	1,747	1,873	1,879	7.6
Clothing and accessories stores	1,602	1,660	1,697	5.9
Clothing stores	1,222	1,260	1,316	7.6
Shoe, clothing accessories and jewellery stores	380	400	381	0.3
General merchandise stores	3,058	3,436	3,262	6.7
Department stores	1,569	1,758	1,686	7.4
Other general merchandise stores	1,489	1,678	1,576	5.9
Miscellaneous retailers	1,522	1,559	1,576	3.5
Sporting goods, hobby, music and book stores	716	750	742	3.6
Miscellaneous store retailers	806	809	834	3.5
Total retail sales	27,442	29,614	29,261	6.6
Total excluding new car dealers, used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	20,393	22,407	22,176	8.7
Provinces and territories				
Newfoundland and Labrador	475	506	479	0.8
Prince Edward Island	119	129	116	-2.4
Nova Scotia	794	877	852	7.3
New Brunswick	636	697	672	5.6
Quebec	6,206	6,782	6,632	6.9
Ontario	10,501	10,929	10,891	3.7
Manitoba	910	992	985	8.2
Saskatchewan	837	885	834	-0.3
Alberta	3,267	3,692	3,736	14.4
British Columbia	3,596	4,020	3,964	10.2
Yukon	36	41	36	-0.5
Northwest Territories	43	44	44	2.2
Nunavut	21	20	20	-7.2

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.



Survey of Suppliers of Business Financing

2003

Canadian businesses reduced their total debt they owed to the major suppliers of financing for a third consecutive year, as debt to large borrowers decreased while debt to smaller borrowers increased.

As of December 31, 2003, these suppliers reported their business clients owed them \$361.1 billion, mainly in the form of loans, mortgages and lines of credit. This was down slightly from 2002, as the relative strength of the Canadian economy continued into 2003.

Lease amounts outstanding grew for a third consecutive year, increasing by a slight 1.5% to \$24.7 billion in 2003.

Debt outstanding

As of December 31

	2000 ^r	2001 ^r	2002 ^r	2003	2000 to 2001	2001 to 2002	2002 to 2003
	amount (\$ billions)				% change		
Authorization size							
\$1 million and less	93.3	94.8	97.2	99.6	1.7	2.5	2.5
\$1 million and more	269.4	266.9	264.3	261.5	-0.9	-1.0	-1.0
Total	362.7	361.8	361.5	361.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1

^r Revised figures.

Smaller borrowers owed more, larger borrowers less

The debt load of large borrowers (those authorized to borrow \$1 million or more) edged down to \$261.5 billion, the third consecutive annual decline.

Continued weakness in exports to the United States in 2003 by some manufacturers and marginal increases in capital spending by others may have reduced the financing needs of these businesses.

As well, domestic banks, the main supplier of financing to large businesses, booked significantly lower loan loss provisions. This suggests they may have become more selective in their lending to large borrowers in 2003.

In contrast, the debt load of smaller borrowers (those authorized to borrow less than \$1 million) increased for the fourth year in a row. They borrowed \$99.6 billion in 2003, up 2.5% from the previous year. Smaller borrowers are mainly smaller businesses, which tend to serve only the domestic market, while large borrowers are much more likely to sell into export markets.

Low interest rates combined with the continued relative strength of the Canadian economy may have encouraged smaller borrowers to take on more debt.

Note to readers

Statistics Canada conducts the Survey of Suppliers of Business Financing in partnership with Industry Canada and the Department of Finance as part of a larger program of research into financing for small- and medium-sized enterprises. Since most suppliers of financing do not track the employment size of their business clients, they were asked to group their clients by authorization size, that is, by the maximum amount they were allowed to borrow. Note that authorization size is used in this survey as a proxy for business size for lack of employment size indicators.

The survey was based on a census of enterprises in selected finance and leasing industries, including government business enterprises, with assets of \$5 million or more. Excluded from the survey were government programs, private not-for-profit organizations, informal suppliers such as business "angels" and family members, and foreign suppliers.

Domestic banks include the six large domestic banks and several smaller ones as defined by the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions.

Other banks include foreign banks, trust companies and all other deposit-accepting institutions except **credit unions and caisses populaires**, which appear in their own category.

Finance companies include non-deposit accepting enterprises that provide financing to businesses, often for the purchase of goods and services. Debt financing is commonly provided; however, companies that purchase accounts receivable or provide both debt and lease financing are also included here. Examples include the acceptance companies of vehicle and equipment manufacturers, factoring companies and many government business enterprises. Enterprises providing only lease financing are usually classified as leasing companies.

Portfolio managers, venture capital companies and financial funds include enterprises typically engaged in managing or investing pools of assets. Examples include mutual fund companies, investment advisors, venture capital companies, labour-sponsored venture capital funds, mutual funds and segregated funds.

Insurance companies include life, health, and property and casualty insurers and re-insurers.

Leasing companies include enterprises providing lease financing, usually for vehicles or equipment.

Domestic banks still dominate but their market share slips

Domestic banks continued to dominate the group that supplies financing to businesses, but their market share slipped again in 2003. Banks held 53% of outstanding debts in 2003, down from nearly 57% in 2000.

As of December 31, 2003, banks had total outstanding debt of \$192.0 billion, a 2.0% decline from the previous year. Just over three-quarters of their loan portfolio was outstanding to large borrowers.

The next largest suppliers were, in order of market share, finance companies, other banks (such as foreign

banks, trust companies), insurance companies and credit unions and *caisses populaires*.

Debt outstanding As of December 31

	2000 ^r	2001 ^r	2002 ^r	2003
	share (%)			
Type of supplier				
Domestic banks	56.8	55.4	54.2	52.8
Finance companies	10.2	10.7	11.7	12.0
Other banks	11.8	11.4	11.6	11.8
Insurance companies	11.5	11.3	10.7	10.7
Credit unions	7.3	8.2	8.9	9.7
Portfolio managers	2.1	2.7	2.7	2.7
Leasing companies	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^r Revised figures.

As debt outstanding to large borrowers has declined since 2000, market shares among credit unions and *caisses populaires* has increased at a rate of about 1% per year. This indicates that they are competing for more share of the debt financing market.

In terms of loan portfolio shares, insurance companies still led the way among suppliers of large loans, providing 95% of their financing exclusively to large borrowers. They were followed by other banks (85%) and domestic banks (77%).

Credit unions and *caisses populaires* were still the top providers of smaller loans (\$1 million or less), with two-thirds of their business in that market. Finance companies, which provided 49% of all their financing to small borrowers, were in second place.

The market share of credit unions and *caisses populaires* fell 2.5 percentage points, while the market share of finance companies declined 2.0 percentage points. This was offset by the same increase in debt outstanding to large borrowers, indicating that these two suppliers are trying to increase their business portfolios to include larger businesses.

Improvement in loss rates

Suppliers reported total losses of \$1.5 billion on their business lending in 2003, a substantial drop from the year-earlier level of \$2.1 billion.

Higher losses in 2001 and 2002 resulted from volatility in many sectors, such as telecommunications and energy along with a turbulent year for manufacturers. This suggests that many suppliers booked significantly lower loan loss provisions in 2003.

The loss rate, that is, total losses in 2003 as a percentage of total debt outstanding at December 31, 2003, improved to 0.42% from 0.59% the year before.

Most suppliers saw their loss rates decline in 2003 from the previous year. Exceptions included portfolio managers and insurance companies which showed no change during the same period.

Leasing up slightly

Lease amounts outstanding increased for the third consecutive year, but only slightly. Leasing rose by just over 1.5% in 2003 following a growth rate of nearly 11% in 2002.

Finance companies continued to dominate, reporting a 10.2% jump in amounts outstanding in 2003. Continued growth has escalated the market share of leasing held by finance companies from 47.6% in 2002 to 51.7% in 2003.

Domestic banks were the next largest suppliers of lease financing. They accounted for 26.1% of total amounts outstanding, down from 27.3% the year before.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2514.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Mike Paju (613-951-1522; mike.paju@statcan.ca) or Seth Nanayakkara (613-951-2617; seth.nanayakkara@statcan.ca), Industrial Organization and Finance Division. ■

OTHER RELEASES

Local government business enterprise finance

Fiscal year ended nearest to December 31, 2002

Spending by local government business enterprises hit \$15.7 billion in 2002, according to new data.

As such, these enterprises, also known as GBEs, played an important role in providing local goods and services to communities.

GBEs comprise electric utilities, transit systems, gas companies and phone companies. Electric utilities by far accounted for the lion's share of spending, just under three-quarters of the total, while public transit systems accounted for about one-quarter.

Income and expenses of local government business enterprises by industry

	2002		Net income
	Income	Expenses	
			After provisions for income tax.
	\$ thousands		
Total	16,276,139	15,716,068	477,341
Electricity	12,032,759	11,512,989	437,040
Transportation	3,874,127	3,897,455	-23,328
Gas	262,407	216,361	46,046
Telephone	106,846	89,263	17,583

GBEs recorded income of \$16.3 billion in 2002, or about one-third of the total revenue of the local general governments (\$49.1 billion) that own them.

Again, electric utilities accounted for just under three-quarters of total income. As a result, these GBEs collectively showed a small profit of just over \$477.3 million. Of this, they remitted a modest \$145.9 million to their local general governments.

Subsidies were an important factor for local public transit companies, but inconsequential for telephone, gas distribution and electric utilities.

Transit GBEs received 54.6% of their total income from user fees and 42.9% from subsidies.

GBEs are incorporated, "for-profit" organizations, which makes them subject to income tax. GBEs are legal entities separate from the municipalities that created them. They differ from municipal governments in that they generally charge prices that are closely

related to the cost of production, as is the case in private enterprises.

Available on CANSIM: table 385-0015.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 1725.

Data are available through custom and special tabulations. For more information on the products or services of the Public Institutions Division, contact Joanne Rice (613-951-0767; joanne.rice@statcan.ca).

To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release contact Aldo Diaz (613-951-8563; aldo.diaz@statcan.ca), Public Institutions Division. ■

Steel wire and specified wire products

September 2004

Data on steel wire and specified wire products production are now available for September.

Available on CANSIM: table 303-0047.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2106.

The September 2004 issue of *Steel Wire and Specified Wire Products*, Vol. 59, no. 9 (41-006-XIB, \$6/\$51) 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. ■

Steel primary forms, weekly data

Week ending November 13, 2004 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending November 13 totalled 291 824 metric tonnes, up 5.0% from 278 055 tonnes a week earlier and up 10.0% from 265 260 tonnes in the same week of 2003.

The year-to-date total as of November 13 was 14 014 139 tonnes, up 2.6% from 13 653 012 tonnes in the same period of 2003.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2131.

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. ■

Mineral wool including fibrous glass insulation

October 2004

Data on mineral wool including fibrous glass insulation are now available for October.

Available on CANSIM: table 303-0059.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2110.

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. ■

Steel pipe and tubing

September 2004

Data on production and shipments of steel pipe and tubing are now available for September.

Available on CANSIM: tables 303-0003 and 303-0046.

Note: Table 303-0003 will be terminated as of October 2004 and data will be available only in table 303-0046.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2105.

The September 2004 issue of *Production and Shipments of Steel Pipe and Tubing*, Vol. 28, no. 9 (41-011-XIB, \$6/\$51) 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

Steel Wire and Specified Wire Products,
September 2004, Vol. 59, no. 9
Catalogue number **41-006-XIB** (\$6/\$51).

. . . au courant, October 2004
Catalogue number **82-005-XIE**
(free).

**Production and Shipments of Steel Pipe and
Tubing**, September 2004, Vol. 28, no. 9
Catalogue number **41-011-XIB** (\$6/\$51).

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

Wholesale Trade, September 2004, Vol. 67, no. 9
Catalogue number **63-008-XIE** (\$15/\$150).

Catalogue numbers with an -XWE, -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
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Catalogue 11-001-XIE (Parcours 11-001-XIE) ISBN 0-662-0007-0-05



Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 3, 1997
For release at 9:30 a.m.



MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1995** 2
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 40 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1995** 4
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was noticeably weaker again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

- **Help-wanted index, May 1997** 3
- **Short-term Expectations Survey** 2
- **Steel primary forms, week ending May 31, 1997** 12
- **Egg production, April 1997** 12

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED 11

Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

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