



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Thursday, March 4, 2004

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time

MAJOR RELEASES

- **Building permits, January 2004** 2
 The momentum from last year's record level of building permits for housing has spilled over into 2004. Municipalities issued a record of nearly \$3.0 billion in permits for housing in January, but overall the value of construction intentions declined 0.9%.
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Postal codes by federal ridings (2003 representation order)

June 2003

The June 2003 update of the *Postal Codes by Federal Riding (2003 Representation Order) File* is now available. This product, a subset of the January 2004 Postal Code Conversion File (PCCF), provides a link between the six-character postal code (of June 2003) and Federal Electoral Districts (commonly known as federal ridings). Data from files containing postal code information may be organized or tabulated by federal riding.

The *Postal Codes by Federal Riding (2003 Representation Order) File* (92F0193XCB \$2,900) is now available in ASCII format on CD-ROM. The reference guide for the *Postal Codes by Federal Riding File* (92F0193GIE, free) is also available.

For more information, or to order this file, contact your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre.



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MAJOR RELEASES

Building permits

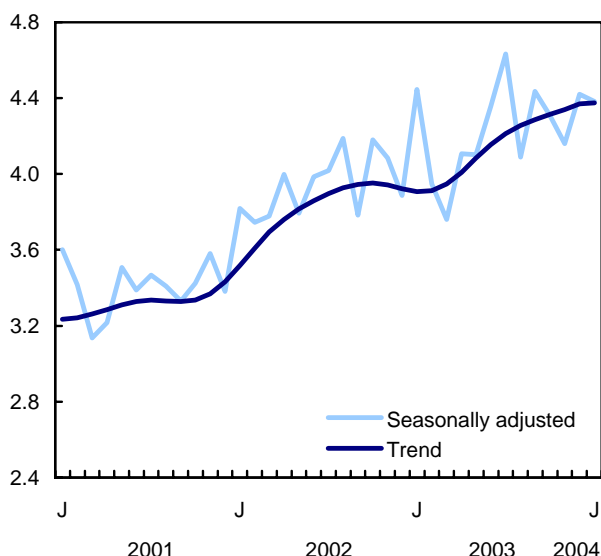
January 2004

The momentum from last year's record level of building permits for housing has spilled over into 2004.

Municipalities issued almost \$3.0 billion worth of building permits for housing in January, up 1.1 % from the previous high in December. This augurs well for a busy spring for workers in the residential construction sector, as permits are a leading indicator of building activity.

Total value of permits declines slightly

\$ billions



A strong demand combined with the increase in the average value of permits issued for new single- and multi-family dwellings was behind the new peak.

In contrast, the value of non-residential permits declined 4.9% to \$1.4 billion, as all three components — industrial, commercial and institutional — retreated. This was the third decline over the last four months.

Overall, builders took out \$4.4 billion in building permits in January, down 0.9% from December, and 1.4% below the value of permits issued in January 2003.

Note to readers

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

The Building Permits 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 levels of building activity have little impact on the total.

The value of planned construction activities shown in this release excludes engineering projects (such as waterworks, sewers or culverts) and land.

Of 28 census metropolitan areas, 19 showed a slower start compared with January 2003. Montréal and Vancouver had the strongest starts, the vigorous housing sector playing the key role in both.

Record-high intentions for multi-family dwellings

January's level of housing permits was 9.6% higher than construction intentions in January 2003.

Municipalities issued a record \$986 million in multi-family permits, up 17.1% from December and 4.8% higher than the previous record set in November 2003.

In January alone, permits for 9,175 new multi-family units were issued, significantly higher than the average monthly level of 8,350 in 2003. A vast majority of the January permits were for new apartments and condominiums.

The \$1.99 billion worth of single-family permits was down 5.3% from the record high set in December, but it was still the second highest level ever.

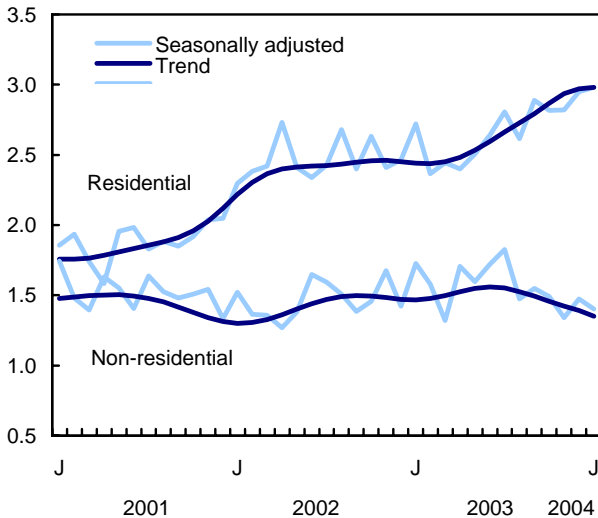
Demand remained high for single-family dwellings, as municipalities authorized 10,740 new units. This was higher than the monthly average of 10,200 units in 2003, which was an exceptional year.

On a year-over-year basis, permits for single-family dwellings were up 6.0% from January 2003, while those for multi-family were up 17.7%.

Factors favorable to the housing sector recently include low mortgage rates and their positive impact on affordability, strength in employment at the end of 2003 and a high level of consumer confidence.

Value of residential permits reaches a record level in January

\$ billions



Fuelled by strong advances from December, New Brunswick, Quebec and British Columbia set new records for the value of residential construction intentions. In contrast, the most important declines in the value of housing permits were incurred by Alberta, Ontario and Nova Scotia.

All three components slide in non-residential sector

The non-residential sector recorded its slowest start in building permits since 1999 in January, as permits were down 18.8% from January 2003.

Intentions in the industrial sector incurred the largest decline, tumbling 19.7% from December to \$223 million, the lowest monthly level since March 2002 and the slowest start since January 2002. Gains in the utility and transportation component failed to offset declines in factory permits. Though reduced demand was noted across the country save for Quebec and Newfoundland, it was Ontario and Alberta which drove the decay.

Demand for commercial permits was off 1.3% to \$862 million. Increases in hotel and restaurant projects could not offset the drop in demand for the other commercial classes, particularly warehouses, laboratories and offices. Ontario took the brunt of the decline, as laboratory and office building projects plunged. Permits for construction in the trade and services sector drove gains in British Columbia.

The value of permits in the institutional sector edged down 1.9% to \$317 million, the slowest month since April 2002 and the weakest start since 2000. British Columbia recorded the most significant decline. Intentions there plunged 31.9% to \$23 million, as permits for educational facilities fell. Quebec, supported by medical projects, posted a 35.3% gain over December, the strongest growth among the provinces.

A level of uncertainty exists in economic indicators, particularly with respect to manufacturing and commercial sectors. While Canadian corporations earned a record \$168.3 billion in operating profits in 2003, these gains were spearheaded by the banking and oil and gas sectors.

Manufacturing profits slid 9.2% from 2002. While overall full-time employment has strengthened, the manufacturing sector has lost 71,000 jobs since November 2002. Near-zero monthly growth has characterized wholesale sales since February 2003 and retail sales of goods and services showed the weakest annual gain (at 3.1%) in 2003 since 1995.

Even so, January's Business Conditions Survey showed manufacturers are cautiously optimistic for the first quarter of 2004, although they did express some concern with low levels of unfilled orders. In addition, preliminary indications are that private sector capital investment is poised to grow for the first time since 2001, according to the Survey of Private and Public Investment.

The only provinces to report an increase in the value of non-residential building permit issues in January were British Columbia, Quebec and Nova Scotia. Ontario reported the greatest drop in dollar terms.

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

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2802.

The January 2004 issue of *Building Permits* (64-001-XIE, \$15/\$156) will be available soon. See *How to order products*.

The February building permit estimate will be released on April 6.

To order data, contact Brad Sernoskie (1-800-579-8533; 613-951-4646; bdp_information@statcan.ca). For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Erik Dorff (613-951-4901), Investment and Capital Stock Division.

□

Value of building permits, by province and territory

	December 2003 ^r	January 2004 ^p	December 2003 to January 2004	January 2003	January 2003 to January 2004
	seasonally adjusted				
	\$ millions		% change	\$ millions	% change
Canada	4,421.4	4,382.3	-0.9	4,445.4	-1.4
Residential	2,948.3	2,980.7	1.1	2,719.9	9.6
Non-residential	1,473.1	1,401.7	-4.9	1,725.5	-18.8
Newfoundland and Labrador	44.3	39.0	-12.1	32.7	19.1
Residential	31.8	28.9	-9.2	21.2	36.3
Non-residential	12.5	10.1	-19.5	11.5	-12.5
Prince Edward Island	19.4	13.9	-28.3	7.8	78.2
Residential	8.6	8.8	2.8	6.0	46.6
Non-residential	10.8	5.1	-52.9	1.8	184.6
Nova Scotia	75.7	78.5	3.8	61.6	27.3
Residential	54.1	44.0	-18.8	46.4	-5.3
Non-residential	21.5	34.5	60.4	15.2	126.5
New Brunswick	47.9	65.8	37.2	40.8	61.3
Residential	37.8	59.7	57.9	32.7	82.5
Non-residential	10.1	6.1	-40.2	8.1	-25.0
Quebec	906.3	1,052.6	16.1	819.2	28.5
Residential	662.7	737.9	11.3	569.7	29.5
Non-residential	243.6	314.8	29.2	249.4	26.2
Ontario	1,978.3	1,831.2	-7.4	2,231.8	-18.0
Residential	1,211.1	1,186.7	-2.0	1,258.5	-5.7
Non-residential	767.1	644.4	-16.0	973.3	-33.8
Manitoba	81.4	72.1	-11.4	68.0	6.0
Residential	50.0	49.0	-1.9	45.5	7.7
Non-residential	31.3	23.0	-26.5	22.5	2.4
Saskatchewan	78.3	46.9	-40.1	77.3	-39.4
Residential	26.5	27.7	4.3	32.8	-15.6
Non-residential	51.8	19.2	-62.8	44.6	-56.8
Alberta	573.1	457.5	-20.2	581.0	-21.2
Residential	388.9	322.7	-17.0	372.9	-13.5
Non-residential	184.2	134.9	-26.7	208.1	-35.2
British Columbia	603.0	720.0	19.4	521.4	38.1
Residential	468.9	511.5	9.1	331.7	54.2
Non-residential	134.2	208.5	55.4	189.8	9.9
Yukon	4.0	1.7	-57.3	1.3	32.8
Residential	3.0	1.7	-44.0	0.8	98.8
Non-residential	1.1	0.1	-94.2	0.5	-86.6
Northwest Territories	9.7	3.1	-68.0	2.4	27.1
Residential	4.8	2.1	-56.3	1.6	28.2
Non-residential	4.8	1.0	-79.6	0.8	24.8
Nunavut	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	...
Residential	0.0	0.0	...	0.0	...
Non-residential	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	...

^r Revised data.

^p Preliminary data.

... Figures not applicable.

Note: Data may not add to totals as a result of rounding.

Value of building permits, by census metropolitan area

	December 2003 ^r	January 2004 ^p	December 2003 to January 2004	January 2003	January 2003 to January 2004
	seasonally adjusted				
	\$ millions		% change	\$ millions	% change
St. John's	31.1	29.8	-4.2	22.3	33.6
Halifax	35.2	34.9	-0.6	33.5	4.3
Saint John	6.3	8.6	35.1	9.1	-6.1
Saguenay	2.4	4.6	86.9	5.4	-15.3
Québec	61.1	90.6	48.3	103.9	-12.8
Sherbrooke	18.7	15.4	-17.8	15.6	-1.7
Trois-Rivières	11.2	8.7	-22.2	9.7	-10.8
Montréal	550.4	627.2	13.9	405.7	54.6
Ottawa-Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	140.6	118.2	-16.0	159.1	-25.8
Ottawa-Gatineau (Quebec part)	40.7	37.1	-8.7	48.2	-22.9
Ottawa-Gatineau (Ontario part)	99.9	81.0	-18.9	111.0	-27.0
Kingston	11.2	13.4	19.5	24.2	-44.4
Oshawa	52.2	40.7	-22.1	45.2	-10.0
Toronto	1,090.1	1,068.8	-2.0	1,241.2	-13.9
Hamilton	97.8	52.6	-46.2	126.6	-58.4
St. Catharines-Niagara	37.8	50.0	32.3	57.6	-13.2
Kitchener	95.0	75.5	-20.6	92.7	-18.6
London	45.6	89.8	97.0	48.2	86.2
Windsor	33.9	38.0	12.1	56.3	-32.6
Greater Sudbury	5.0	1.3	-74.9	1.5	-17.8
Thunder Bay	2.1	4.5	111.0	2.4	84.1
Winnipeg	56.5	48.9	-13.6	44.6	9.6
Regina	20.1	20.8	3.7	14.0	48.7
Saskatoon	26.6	15.0	-43.8	40.7	-63.2
Calgary	223.1	155.0	-30.5	275.8	-43.8
Edmonton	166.8	161.3	-3.3	149.1	8.2
Abbotsford	15.4	9.2	-40.4	14.0	-34.5
Vancouver	385.1	484.2	25.7	305.4	58.5
Victoria	52.1	34.1	-34.5	51.6	-33.9

^r Revised data.

^p Preliminary data.

Note: Data may not add to totals as a result of rounding.

■

OTHER RELEASES

Interim list of changes to municipal boundaries, status and name

January 2, 2003 to January 1, 2004

A report titled *Interim List of Changes to Municipal Boundaries, Status and Name* summarizes the changes to municipal boundaries, status and names that occurred from January 2, 2003 to January 1, 2004. These changes have been processed by the Geography Division, and are based on information received from the provinces and territories.

Interim List of Changes to Municipal Boundaries, Status and Name (92F0009XPB, \$27), released annually, is now available. See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to order these product, contact your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre. ■

Domestic sales of refined petroleum products

January 2004 (preliminary)

Sales of refined petroleum products totalled 8 171 300 cubic metres in January, up 1.3 % from

January 2003. Sales increased in five of the seven major product groups, with diesel fuel oil up 75 100 cubic metres or 4.1%. Light fuel oil increased 36 500 cubic metres or 4.3%. Heavy fuel oil sales fell 55 100 cubic metres or 8.6%.

Motor gasoline sales at 3 262 100 cubic metres remained relatively flat compared with a year earlier. Sales of premium and regular non-leaded gasoline rose 4.4% and 0.3% respectively, while sales of mid grade dropped 5.1% from January 2003.

Preliminary domestic sales of refined petroleum products data are no longer available on CANSIM.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2150.

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.

Sales of refined petroleum products

	January 2003 ^r	January 2004 ^p	January 2003 to January 2004
	'000 of cubic metres		% change
Total, all products	8 062.6	8 171.3	1.3
Motor gasoline	3 242.2	3 262.1	0.6
Diesel fuel oil	1 833.3	1 908.4	4.1
Light fuel oil	857.6	894.1	4.3
Heavy fuel oil	638.1	583.0	-8.6
Aviation turbo fuels	389.7	415.8	6.7
Petrochemical feedstocks ¹	402.6	368.9	-8.4
All other refined products	699.1	739.0	5.7

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.

¹ Materials produced by refineries that are used by the petrochemical industry to produce chemicals, synthetic rubber and a variety of plastics. ■

Primary iron and steel

December 2003

Data on primary iron and steel are now available for December.

Available on CANSIM: table 303-0010.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2106, 2116 and 2184.

The December 2003 issue of *Primary Iron and Steel*, Vol 58, no. 12 (41-001-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

Balance Sheet of the Agricultural Sector:
Agriculture Economic Statistics, November 2003,
Vol. 2, no. 2
Catalogue number 21-016-XIE
(free).

Agriculture Value Added Account: Agriculture
Economic Statistics, November 2003, Vol. 2, no. 2
Catalogue number 21-017-XIE
(free).

Farm Business Cash Flows: Agriculture Economic
Statistics, November 2003, Vol. 2, no. 2
Catalogue number 21-018-XIE
(free).

Primary Iron and Steel, December 2003, Vol. 58,
no. 12
Catalogue number 41-001-XIB (\$6/\$51).

Interim List of Changes to Municipal Boundaries,
Status, and Names (geography products:
geographic reference products), January 2003 to
January 2004
Catalogue number 92F0009XPB (\$27).

Postal Codes by Federal Ridings
(2003 Representation Order) File, 2001 Census
(geography products: attribute information
products), reference guide, June 2003
Catalogue number 92F0193GIE
(free).

Postal Codes by Federal Ridings
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
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Catalogue 11-001-XIE (F) English 11-001-XIE/001-0007-0-001	
 The Daily	
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Thursday, June 3, 1997 For release at 9:30 a.m.	
MAJOR RELEASES	
• Urban transit, 1996 Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 21 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.	2
• Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1996 Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was modestly weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.	4
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Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001-XIE.

Published each working day by the Communications Division, Statistics Canada, 10-H, R.H. Coats Bldg., Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6.

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