



# The Daily

Statistics Canada

**Monday, February 6, 2006**

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time

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Canada's building boom showed no signs of abating in 2005, as the total value of construction permits roared over the \$60-billion mark for the first time following a record month in December.	
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## Releases

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### Building permits

Annual 2005 (preliminary) and December 2005

Canada's building boom showed no signs of abating in 2005, as the total value of construction permits roared over the \$60-billion mark for the first time following a record month in December. In fact, several monthly and annual records were broken.

Contractors took out a record \$60.7 billion worth of building permits last year, 9.3% higher than the previous high of \$55.6 billion issued in 2004. The level for December alone hit a record \$6.3 billion. The annual level of permits has now increased for 10 consecutive years.

Construction intentions for the year reached new peaks in every province except Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec and Manitoba.

Last year's surge was due primarily to record investment projects in the non-residential sector, which amounted to \$22.0 billion, up 17.6% from the \$18.7 billion issued in 2004.

Non-residential permits rose in every province, except Quebec and Manitoba, but it was the vigorous economies of Alberta and British Columbia that fuelled most of the gain. If these two provinces were excluded, the annual value of non-residential permits would have risen only 3.3%.

In the housing sector, the value of permits rose 5.1% to \$38.7 billion in 2005, fuelled by strong demand for new multi-family dwellings. The value of single-family permits remained almost unchanged. Again, Alberta and British Columbia were behind this increase, as the value of residential permits fell 1.5% in all other provinces and territories combined.

The demand for new housing clearly remained strong. Municipalities authorized the construction of 238,830 new dwelling units last year, down a slight 1.1% from 2004, but still the second highest number since 1987.

Regionally, double-digit growth was recorded in the total value of permits in every metropolitan area in the three westernmost provinces. Annual gains in Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver greatly surpassed increases in all other metropolitan areas, thanks to strong increases in both residential and non-residential components. In contrast, Toronto and Montréal showed the biggest losses.

#### Note to readers

*This release presents seasonally adjusted monthly data, which ease comparisons by removing the effects of seasonal variations. The annual totals correspond to the sum of the unadjusted monthly figures and are preliminary.*

*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 (for example, waterworks, sewers or culverts) and land.*

### Non-residential sector: Strong advances in all three components

All three components contributed to the record year for non-residential construction intentions.

The value of commercial permits hit a record high \$12.0 billion, up 18.5% from 2004 and the second annual record high in a row. A record value for hotel and restaurant buildings and strong construction intentions for office buildings were behind this huge increase.

The institutional component rose 17.4% to \$6.0 billion, also a record high. This growth was based mainly on strong construction intentions in the education and medical categories.

Industrial construction intentions rose 15.1% to \$4.0 billion in 2005, the smallest annual gain among the three. The main factor behind this gain was construction projects for manufacturing buildings and in the utility and transportation categories.

Provincially, the largest annual increase (in dollars) occurred in Alberta where the value of non-residential permits soared 68.8% to a record \$4.2 billion, thanks to gains in all three components. In British Columbia, the value of non-residential permits surged 54.7% to \$3.2 billion.

Gains were posted in 20 of the 28 census metropolitan areas in the non-residential sector last year. The strongest growth occurred in Calgary, where the value of permits surged 78.1% to \$1.6 billion and where all three components increased. This robust growth was based mainly on strong construction intentions in the office building category. Non-residential permits also rose a significant 36.8% to \$1.7 billion in Vancouver.

Non-residential building construction benefited from low interest rates throughout 2005, even though contractors had to contend with higher construction

costs, which added upward pressure on amounts invested. Strong retail sales, high levels of industrial capacity utilization and tighter office vacancy rates in several centres also contributed to the robust gains.

**Housing: Demand shifts toward multi-family units**

Demand in the residential sector shifted last year toward multi-family dwellings. In 2005, they accounted for 48.9% of all new dwelling units authorized, up from 46.0% the year before. It was the highest proportion since 1982 when they represented 51.2% of all new units.

The demand for single-family units declined 6.3% in 2005 as municipalities approved the construction of 122,090 new single units.

Despite the decrease in the number of units, the value of permits for single-family dwellings rose 1.0% to \$25.2 billion, thanks to higher prices.

On the other hand, these high prices led to the shift in demand toward multi-family dwellings. Municipalities authorized 116,740 multi-family units, up 5.1% from 2004 and the highest number since 1977.

The value of multi-family permits issued increased 13.5% to \$13.5 billion.

Among the factors behind last year's strong results in the residential sector were low mortgage rates, growth in full-time employment, the dynamic economy in Western Canada and a high level of immigration.

**December 2005: Several records tumble**

In December, the value of building permits soared to a record \$6.3 billion, up 27.4% from November and 15.3% higher than the previous monthly record of \$5.4 billion set in August.

December's big gain was the result of a huge jump in the number of approved multi-family projects in Toronto. Several permits related to applications received earlier had to be issued before the end of 2005 in order to avoid higher development charges. Furthermore, building permit fees increased as of January 2006.

In December alone, Toronto issued \$1.2 billion worth of building permits, more than four times the monthly average of \$288 million during the first 11 months of the year.

New provincial records for monthly permits were set in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia.

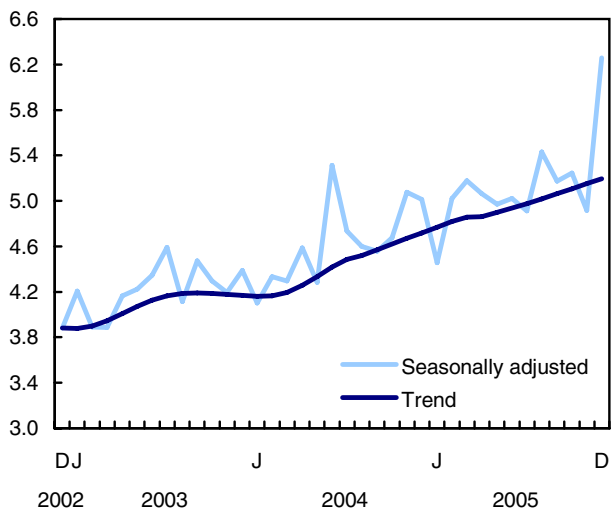
In the housing sector, the value of permits in December hit a record \$4.4 billion, up 40.8% from

November and 29.7% higher than the previous record set in June 2004. In the non-residential sector, intentions were up a more moderate 3.3% to \$1.8 billion, with gains in the commercial and institutional components.

The value of multi-family permits more than doubled to a record \$2.0 billion, well above the previous high of \$1.3 billion in June 2004. Furthermore, the value of single-family permits was up 9.0% to a record \$2.44 billion, surpassing the previous peak of \$2.41 billion set in December 2004.

**Total value of permits surpasses the \$6.0 billion mark**

\$ billions



Apart from Ontario's exceptional results in housing, new monthly records were also set in December in residential intentions in Alberta (\$659 million) and British Columbia (\$796 million). In both provinces, single- and multi-family components contributed to the strong results.

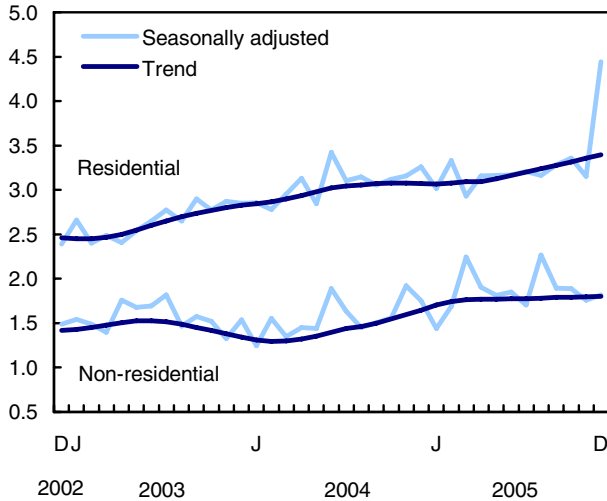
The non-residential sector shrugged off three consecutive months of declines in December, increasing 3.3% to \$1.8 billion, with seven of the provinces recording gains.

The commercial component halted two months of declines, rising 13.2% to \$1.1 billion. Alberta showed the strongest growth in this sector, with construction intentions increasing particularly for office buildings.

The value of institutional permits increased 3.7% to \$454 million. Education and social service buildings were behind this increase.

**The value of residential permits increase drastically**

\$ billions



The value of industrial permits fell 24.3% to \$267 million, the second consecutive monthly

decrease and the lowest level in 10 months. All industrial categories showed declines.

This was in line with Statistics Canada's latest Business Condition Survey that showed manufacturers were slightly more cautious in their outlook for the first quarter of 2006, compared with the fourth quarter of 2005.

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

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2802.**

The December 2005 issue of *Building Permits* (64-001-XIE, \$15/\$156) will be available soon.

The January 2006 building permit estimate will be released on March 6.

To order data, contact Brad Sernoskie (613-951-4646; 1-800-579-8533; [bdp\\_information@statcan.ca](mailto:bdp_information@statcan.ca)).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Étienne Saint-Pierre (613-951-2025), Investment and Capital Stock Division.

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Value of building permits, by census metropolitan area<sup>1</sup>

	November 2005 <sup>r</sup>	December 2005 <sup>p</sup>	November to December 2005	January to December 2004	January to December 2005	January–December 2004 to January–December 2005
	seasonally adjusted			not seasonally adjusted		
	\$ millions		% change	\$ millions		% change
St. John's	21.6	23.4	8.2	375.7	343.2	-8.7
Halifax	47.5	35.0	-26.3	608.6	584.5	-4.0
Saint John	10.3	10.5	1.6	117.8	145.8	23.7
Saguenay	12.2	2.4	-80.2	125.5	161.4	28.6
Québec	71.6	130.5	82.4	1,132.1	1,205.9	6.5
Sherbrooke	11.3	12.4	9.2	241.1	231.7	-3.9
Trois-Rivières	14.4	19.0	31.2	187.2	195.2	4.3
Montréal	461.7	366.9	-20.5	6,232.7	5,820.9	-6.6
Ottawa-Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	185.1	125.5	-32.2	2,265.7	2,243.9	-1.0
Ottawa-Gatineau (Que. part)	31.0	30.8	-0.7	569.4	413.2	-27.4
Ottawa-Gatineau (Ont. part)	154.1	94.8	-38.5	1,696.3	1,830.8	7.9
Kingston	15.2	12.8	-15.4	228.9	191.4	-16.4
Oshawa	88.9	38.1	-57.2	730.3	902.3	23.6
Toronto	828.6	1,841.2	122.2	12,148.9	11,385.2	-6.3
Hamilton	65.7	80.4	22.3	962.4	1,071.2	11.3
St. Catharines–Niagara	35.1	32.2	-8.2	539.8	501.7	-7.1
Kitchener	76.5	110.6	44.6	973.5	934.3	-4.0
London	58.7	59.7	1.6	838.0	816.8	-2.5
Windsor	37.6	29.9	-20.6	572.2	519.8	-9.2
Greater Sudbury/Grand Sudbury	8.6	5.2	-39.9	135.2	174.0	28.7
Thunder Bay	8.1	3.4	-58.6	115.3	121.1	5.0
Winnipeg	81.6	56.2	-31.2	748.3	688.8	-8.0
Regina	51.4	23.5	-54.2	241.6	275.3	14.0
Saskatoon	20.0	42.5	112.3	279.4	366.3	31.1
Calgary	380.7	444.5	16.8	2,856.9	3,921.3	37.3
Edmonton	237.1	298.8	26.1	2,027.8	2,936.0	44.8
Abbotsford	29.0	13.8	-52.6	196.3	305.5	55.6
Vancouver	444.0	507.9	14.4	4,842.8	5,643.6	16.5
Victoria	56.1	41.7	-25.7	537.3	708.8	31.9

<sup>r</sup> Revised.

<sup>p</sup> Preliminary.

1. Go online to view the census subdivisions that comprise the census metropolitan areas.

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

**Value of building permits, by province and territory**

	November 2005 <sup>r</sup>	December 2005 <sup>p</sup>	November to December 2005	January to December 2004	January to December 2005	January–December 2004 to January–December 2005
	seasonally adjusted			not seasonally adjusted		
	\$ millions		% change	\$ millions		% change
<b>Canada</b>	<b>4,915.3</b>	<b>6,260.1</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>55,578.6</b>	<b>60,745.2</b>	<b>9.3</b>
Residential	3,155.0	4,441.3	40.8	36,833.4	38,704.6	5.1
Non-residential	1,760.4	1,818.8	3.3	18,745.1	22,040.7	17.6
Newfoundland and Labrador	32.8	33.2	1.1	501.2	494.1	-1.4
Residential	26.0	25.4	-2.5	360.1	330.5	-8.2
Non-residential	6.8	7.8	15.1	141.2	163.7	16.0
Prince Edward Island	21.2	17.2	-18.9	223.8	244.1	9.0
Residential	15.9	14.6	-8.6	137.1	131.7	-3.9
Non-residential	5.3	2.7	-49.7	86.8	112.4	29.5
Nova Scotia	96.4	97.9	1.6	1,125.8	1,188.3	5.6
Residential	73.5	69.3	-5.7	757.4	783.0	3.4
Non-residential	22.9	28.6	24.9	368.4	405.3	10.0
New Brunswick	59.7	56.7	-5.1	797.3	833.6	4.6
Residential	36.8	41.4	12.4	482.0	480.1	-0.4
Non-residential	22.9	15.3	-33.1	315.4	353.5	12.1
Quebec	875.1	897.5	2.6	11,629.6	11,334.0	-2.5
Residential	603.4	601.8	-0.3	7,970.6	7,886.4	-1.1
Non-residential	271.7	295.7	8.8	3,659.0	3,447.6	-5.8
Ontario	1,836.8	2,854.9	55.4	23,905.3	24,079.4	0.7
Residential	1,121.3	2,131.9	90.1	15,214.0	14,916.0	-2.0
Non-residential	715.5	723.0	1.1	8,691.3	9,163.4	5.4
Manitoba	125.7	94.2	-25.1	1,150.4	1,130.5	-1.7
Residential	93.4	62.2	-33.4	675.6	696.4	3.1
Non-residential	32.4	32.0	-1.2	474.8	434.1	-8.6
Saskatchewan	94.9	98.7	4.0	770.0	905.3	17.6
Residential	48.5	37.7	-22.3	401.8	396.8	-1.2
Non-residential	46.4	61.0	31.3	368.1	508.5	38.1
Alberta	949.0	1,053.1	11.0	7,327.1	10,208.4	39.3
Residential	565.4	658.8	16.5	4,864.2	6,050.7	24.4
Non-residential	383.6	394.2	2.8	2,462.9	4,157.7	68.8
British Columbia	805.6	1,051.9	30.6	7,938.7	10,158.2	28.0
Residential	568.0	796.3	40.2	5,868.9	6,956.8	18.5
Non-residential	237.5	255.5	7.6	2,069.8	3,201.4	54.7
Yukon	15.9	3.4	-78.7	75.9	67.0	-11.8
Residential	2.3	1.1	-52.2	38.2	36.5	-4.5
Non-residential	13.6	2.3	-83.3	37.8	30.5	-19.1
Northwest Territories	1.9	1.0	-44.0	105.3	69.7	-33.7
Residential	0.1	0.4	296.1	46.7	28.2	-39.7
Non-residential	1.8	0.6	-63.8	58.5	41.6	-29.0
Nunavut	0.3	0.6	66.3	28.1	32.6	15.7
Residential	0.3	0.6	66.3	16.9	11.5	-31.8
Non-residential	0.0	0.0	...	11.3	21.1	87.0

<sup>r</sup> Revised.

<sup>p</sup> Preliminary.

... Figures not applicable.

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



## **Estimates of the number of census families July 1, 2005**

Estimates of the number of census families on July 1, 2005 for Canada, the provinces and territories, are now available.

Except for the territories, estimates are distributed by structure of family (husband-wife or lone-parent), size, age group of children, age of husband and wife for husband-wife families and age and sex of parent in lone-parent families.

These estimates are based on the 2001 Census counts adjusted for net undercoverage.

**Available on CANSIM: table 051-0003.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3606.**

These estimates will appear in *Annual Demographic Statistics*, 2005 (91-213-XIB, \$60; 91-213-XPB, \$134), which will be available on March 29.

For more information or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (613-951-2320; fax: 613-951-2307; [demography@statcan.ca](mailto:demography@statcan.ca)), Demography Division. ■

## **Annual Survey of Traveller Accommodation 2004 (revised)**

Data for 2004 for the traveller accommodation industry (NAICS industry category 721, which includes hotels and motor hotels, motels and other accommodation

industries) has been updated and revised. These data provide information on revenue, expenses, salaries and wages, and profit margins.

**Available on CANSIM: table 351-0002.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2418.**

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Irene Ross (613-951-6305; [irene.pucci@statcan.ca](mailto:irene.pucci@statcan.ca)) or Veronica Utovac (613-951-0813; [veronica.utovac@statcan.ca](mailto:veronica.utovac@statcan.ca)), Service Industries Division. ■

## **Natural gas liquids and liquefied petroleum gases**

April to September 2005

Data on the supply and demand for natural gas liquids and liquefied petroleum gases are now available up to September 2005.

**Available on CANSIM: table 132-0001.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 7524.**

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

## New products

**Exports by Commodity**, November 2005, Vol. 62, no. 11  
Catalogue number **65-004-XMB** (\$40/\$387).

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

**Exports by Commodity**, November 2005, Vol. 62, no. 11  
Catalogue number **65-004-XPB** (\$84/\$828).

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; -XCB or -XCE are electronic versions on compact disc and -XBB or -XBE a database.

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Catalogue 11-001-XIE (if single) 11-001-XIE/0597-01-01

**The Daily**  
Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 5, 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 the average of about 100 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 relatively weak again in 1996 accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

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**Canada**

### Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001-XIE.

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

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