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The Daily

Statistics Canada

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Releases

Releases

Building permits

February 2009

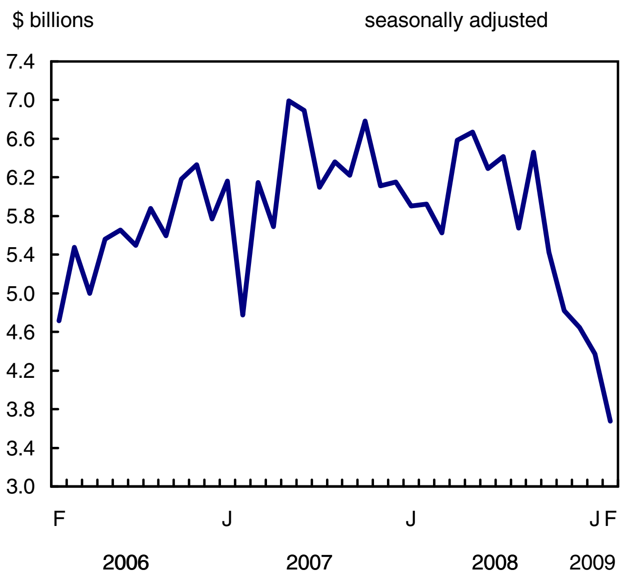
The value of building permits fell 15.9% to $3.7 billion in February. The largest decreases came from the non-residential sector in Ontario.

In the residential sector, the value of permits edged down 0.3% to $2.1 billion. The increase in the value of permits for multiple dwellings in British Columbia nearly offset the declines in the residential sector in six provinces.

In the non-residential sector, the value of permits fell 30.5% to $1.6 billion. This decline was due to a drop in Ontario and decreases in four other provinces.

The total value of construction intentions declined in half the provinces.

The value of permits declines in February



Non-residential sector: Decrease in institutional and commercial components

Following a 64.2% increase in January, the value of permits for institutional components declined 56.4% to $363 million in February. The decrease came mainly from construction intentions for medical buildings in Ontario and Quebec and a decline in permits for educational institutions in Ontario and Alberta.

Note to readers

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

The Building Permits Survey covers 2,400 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.

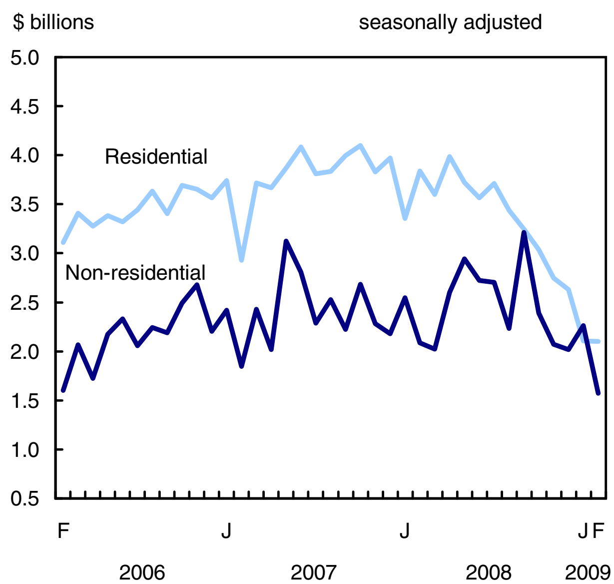
The value of planned construction activities shown in this release excludes engineering projects (e.g., waterworks, sewers or culverts) and land.

For the purpose of this release, the census metropolitan area of Ottawa–Gatineau (Ontario/Quebec) is divided into two areas: Gatineau part and Ottawa part.

Permit values for the commercial component declined 20.4% to $972 million. This decrease came largely from construction intentions for office buildings and recreational buildings in Ontario. However, British Columbia experienced the strongest growth in this component.

The value of industrial permits increased 14.3% to $236 million, following a 50.8% decrease in January. The gain in February was a result of increased intentions in six provinces.

The non-residential sector declines



The value of residential permits virtually unchanged

The value of permits in the residential sector declined 0.3%, as the increase in multi-family permits nearly offset the decline in single-family permits.

Municipalities issued $756 million worth of permits for multi-family dwellings in February, up 10.6% from January. The value of multi-family dwelling permits nearly quadrupled in British Columbia, while Quebec, Saskatchewan and Ontario reported declines.

The value of single-family permits fell 5.5% in February to $1.3 billion. Intentions in this component have been declining since July 2008. The decrease in February was mainly a result of declines in Quebec, Ontario and Saskatchewan.

Municipalities approved 10,341 new dwellings in February, down 3.2%. Single-family units decreased 6.9% to 5,211. The number of multi-family units rose 0.9% to 5,130 units.

Increase in British Columbia

The value of building permits increased in half the provinces with British Columbia leading the way.

British Columbia reported an 86.5% gain in the value of its permits, spread out among all components.

Ontario experienced a 38.2% decline in the value of its permits. This decrease came from construction intentions for institutional and commercial buildings and residential permits.

Quebec (-18.0%) and Saskatchewan (-43.5%) also posted declines in both the residential and non-residential sectors.

Metropolitan areas: Increases in Vancouver

The total value of permits increased in 17 of the 34 census metropolitan areas.

Vancouver reported the most significant increases. The advances were generalized except for the industrial component.

In contrast, Toronto saw declines for all components. Barrie followed with decreases that could not be offset by the increase in the value of multiple-family permits.

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

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2802.

The February 2009 issue of *Building Permits* (64-001-XWE, free) will be available soon.

The March building permit estimate will be released on May 6.

To order data, contact Jasmine Gaudreault (toll-free 1-800-579-8533; 613-951-6321). For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Nicole Charron (613-951-0087), Investment and Capital Stock Division.

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Value of building permits, by census metropolitan area[1]

	October 2008	November 2008	December 2008	January 2009[r]	February 2009[p]	January to February 2009
	Seasonally adjusted					
	$ millions					% change
Total	**3,863.3**	**3,486.5**	**3,491.6**	**3,147.6**	**2,600.1**	**-17.4**
St. John's	52.3	43.9	59.3	27.2	43.2	58.8
Halifax	54.9	58.3	28.6	30.2	46.5	53.9
Moncton	24.6	13.5	20.6	10.0	68.7	590.1
Saint John	24.1	27.2	28.2	10.2	21.7	113.5
Saguenay	15.7	26.2	170.0	11.9	7.0	-41.7
Québec	116.0	78.5	101.0	129.0	85.4	-33.8
Sherbrooke	30.8	29.3	18.4	19.8	16.2	-17.8
Trois-Rivières	35.6	48.6	25.8	11.5	13.5	17.2
Montréal	605.0	561.0	534.2	423.4	334.0	-21.1
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	279.7	189.7	134.7	142.9	146.5	2.5
Gatineau part	50.0	62.8	83.6	59.4	35.7	-39.9
Ottawa part	229.7	126.9	51.1	83.4	110.8	32.8
Kingston	16.1	13.2	10.7	11.6	18.5	59.5
Peterborough	19.1	13.7	6.1	6.3	4.8	-22.7
Oshawa	15.8	59.1	19.7	117.1	19.0	-83.8
Toronto	840.6	684.5	1,094.2	960.9	569.0	-40.8
Hamilton	72.6	59.0	87.2	32.0	39.3	22.8
St. Catharines–Niagara	23.8	35.4	34.6	13.0	37.8	191.3
Kitchener	79.3	89.1	85.5	47.7	65.9	38.1
Brantford	13.5	10.4	10.9	8.2	15.7	92.2
Guelph	84.2	8.5	5.2	8.2	20.6	150.1
London	52.9	29.1	48.1	40.9	28.8	-29.5
Windsor	11.1	12.8	6.5	23.8	10.1	-57.5
Barrie	29.1	24.9	18.0	229.5	4.2	-98.2
Greater Sudbury	23.8	16.2	35.0	8.3	18.7	127.0
Thunder Bay	8.3	8.4	5.7	5.7	5.2	-8.3
Winnipeg	83.2	65.8	84.1	61.7	50.7	-17.9
Regina	36.0	47.2	42.3	73.3	38.3	-47.7
Saskatoon	54.6	38.3	48.3	53.9	26.2	-51.3
Calgary	318.6	457.9	200.1	175.2	195.9	11.8
Edmonton	274.9	292.4	286.3	236.7	166.2	-29.8
Kelowna	34.3	30.6	15.8	38.7	20.7	-46.5
Abbotsford	16.2	8.3	3.6	5.7	9.1	60.3
Vancouver	456.6	356.1	193.3	139.5	330.6	137.0
Victoria	59.9	49.3	29.5	33.8	122.1	261.0

r *revised*
p *preliminary*
1. *Go online to view the census subdivisions that comprise the census metropolitan areas.*
Note: *Data may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.*

Value of building permits, by province and territory

	October 2008	November 2008	December 2008	January 2009[r]	February 2009[p]	January to February 2009
	Seasonally adjusted					
	$ millions					% change
Canada	**5,426.1**	**4,820.8**	**4,647.1**	**4,370.0**	**3,674.9**	**-15.9**
Residential	**3,036.8**	**2,748.7**	**2,630.2**	**2,108.5**	**2,102.8**	**-0.3**
Non-residential	**2,389.2**	**2,072.0**	**2,016.8**	**2,261.5**	**1,572.1**	**-30.5**
Newfoundland and Labrador	75.1	66.4	83.0	49.3	63.0	27.7
Residential	46.3	56.1	69.8	44.6	55.1	23.4
Non-residential	28.8	10.4	13.1	4.7	7.9	68.4
Prince Edward Island	17.8	17.6	16.2	12.6	46.3	268.7
Residential	9.0	8.5	14.2	6.7	6.7	-1.1
Non-residential	8.7	9.1	2.0	5.8	39.6	579.9
Nova Scotia	103.1	107.6	102.4	88.3	85.0	-3.8
Residential	59.0	48.2	47.5	50.1	65.2	30.2
Non-residential	44.1	59.4	54.9	38.2	19.8	-48.3
New Brunswick	105.9	78.9	94.9	75.3	117.8	56.3
Residential	48.1	49.6	41.9	42.7	38.0	-11.1
Non-residential	57.8	29.3	53.0	32.6	79.8	144.8
Quebec	1,283.3	1,104.6	1,197.8	933.6	765.6	-18.0
Residential	754.4	750.6	685.9	619.9	527.1	-15.0
Non-residential	529.0	354.0	511.9	313.7	238.5	-24.0
Ontario	1,845.7	1,497.8	1,770.5	2,009.4	1,241.6	-38.2
Residential	1,078.1	914.1	1,065.3	779.0	740.0	-5.0
Non-residential	767.6	583.8	705.2	1,230.4	501.6	-59.2
Manitoba	142.5	101.7	119.8	109.5	117.8	7.6
Residential	93.9	71.8	83.6	70.1	65.7	-6.2
Non-residential	48.6	29.9	36.1	39.4	52.1	32.2
Saskatchewan	140.4	154.8	138.8	181.0	102.2	-43.5
Residential	90.7	75.0	71.0	97.8	54.6	-44.1
Non-residential	49.7	79.8	67.8	83.3	47.6	-42.8
Alberta	830.6	1,045.2	754.6	573.2	509.0	-11.2
Residential	429.3	438.7	361.0	219.5	234.8	7.0
Non-residential	401.3	606.6	393.5	353.7	274.2	-22.5
British Columbia	861.1	604.9	357.3	331.5	618.4	86.5
Residential	413.7	326.1	187.0	174.2	311.6	78.9
Non-residential	447.4	278.9	170.3	157.4	306.9	95.0
Yukon	6.7	7.0	2.7	5.8	3.7	-36.4
Residential	4.4	6.3	2.7	3.6	2.6	-29.9
Non-residential	2.3	0.8	0.0	2.2	1.1	-47.3
Northwest Territories	9.1	26.9	9.1	0.4	3.5	761.4
Residential	5.4	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.5	97.7
Non-residential	3.8	26.1	8.9	0.2	3.0	1,895.4
Nunavut	4.7	7.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	...
Residential	4.6	3.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	...
Non-residential	0.1	4.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	...

r *revised*
p *preliminary*
... *not applicable*
Note: *Data may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.*

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Quarterly Retail Commodity Survey

Fourth quarter 2008

Declines in sales of commodities related to the automotive sector led to a 0.9% decrease in retail sales in the fourth quarter of 2008 compared with the same quarter of 2007. Total sales amounted to $108.4 billion, the first year-over-year decline in total sales observed since the start of the survey in 1998.

The largest year-over-year decline was in motor vehicles (new and used), parts and services. The 8.9% decline in sales of motor vehicles, parts and services was mainly the result of a 20.4% drop in the value of sales of new trucks (which include light and heavy trucks, vans, minivans and sport utility vehicles). Sales of new cars fell 11.4%. This reflects volume and price declines.

Sales of used vehicles also declined, falling 9.1% compared with the same quarter of 2007. Sales of automotive parts, accessories and services were up 8.6%, largely a result of the strength in tire sales.

The value of sales of automotive fuels, oils and additives was down 7.1%. This commodity's value was mainly influenced by changes in the price of gasoline at the pump.

Sales of furniture, home furnishings and electronics were down 2.7%. Within this category, sales of home furnishings declined, while sales of furniture, household appliances and electronics were unchanged.

While sales for big ticket items such as automobiles and furniture declined, sales for less discretionary items such as food and prescription drugs increased between the fourth quarter of 2007 and the fourth quarter of 2008.

The largest increase was a 6.4% rise in sales of food and beverages. Prices of food purchased from stores rose 8.4% during the period, according to the Consumer Price Index.

The second largest year-over-year increase was a 2.9% rise in sales of health and personal care products. The main contributor to the increase was sales of prescription drugs.

Note: The Quarterly Retail Commodity Survey collects national level retail sales by commodity, from a sub-sample of businesses in the Monthly Retail Trade Survey. Quarterly data have not been adjusted for seasonality. All percentage changes are year over year.

Available on CANSIM: tables 080-0018 and 080-0019.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2008.

For more information, or to order data, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; *retailinfo@statcan.gc.ca*). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Ruth Barnes (613-951-6190), Distributive Trades Division.

Sales by commodity, all retail stores

	Fourth quarter 2007	Third quarter 2008[r]	Fourth quarter 2008[p]	Fourth quarter 2007 to fourth quarter 2008
	Unadjusted			
	$ millions			% change
Commodity				
Food and beverages	23,497	24,166	24,991	6.4
Health and personal care products	9,600	9,264	9,875	2.9
Clothing, footwear and accessories	10,786	8,532	10,698	-0.8
Furniture, home furnishings and electronics	11,904	10,259	11,587	-2.7
Motor vehicles, parts and services	20,274	21,946	18,477	-8.9
Automotive fuels, oils and additives	10,792	14,188	10,025	-7.1
Housewares	2,152	2,048	2,165	0.6
Hardware, lawn and garden products	6,670	8,481	6,761	1.4
Sporting and leisure goods	4,757	3,386	4,695	-1.3
All other goods and services	8,935	9,859	9,078	1.6
Total	**109,367**	**112,127**	**108,351**	**-0.9**

r *revised*
p *preliminary*
Note: *Figures may not add up to totals due to rounding.*

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Sound recording and music publishing
2007

Data on the sound recording and music publishing industry are now available for 2007.

Available on CANSIM: table 361-0005.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3115.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Yusu Guo (613-951-0746; fax: 613-951-6696; *yusu.guo@statcan.gc.ca*), Service Industries Division. ■

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2006 Census profiles

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