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Releases

Building permits

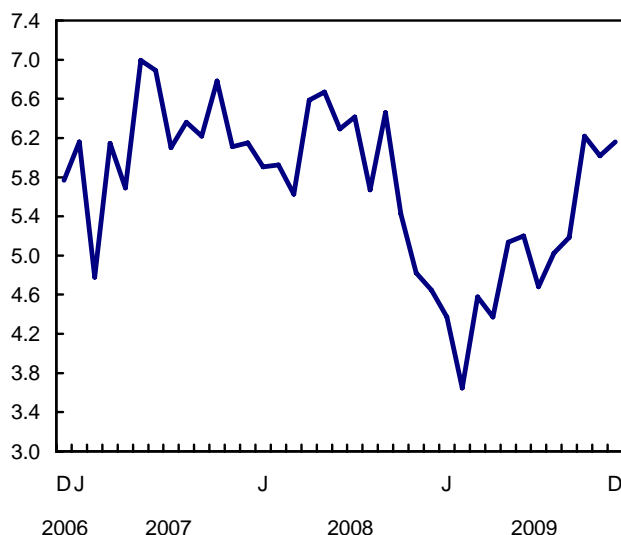
December 2009

Contractors took out \$6.2 billion in building permits in December, up 2.4% from November and 32.6% higher than in December 2008.

The increase in the value of permits in December was entirely due to the non-residential sector. Conversely, the upward trend in the total value of construction intentions in 2009 was largely due to the residential sector.

Total value of permits

\$ billions



In the non-residential sector, municipalities issued permits worth \$2.3 billion, 6.8% more than in November and 13.3% more than in December 2008. The December 2009 increase stems primarily from an increase in the commercial components in Alberta and Ontario.

In the residential sector, the value of permits remained steady at \$3.9 billion. Declines in Ontario, Alberta and Manitoba were offset by a gain in British Columbia. In recent months, the value of permits has started to approach the peak reached before the economic slowdown.

Note to readers

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

Preliminary data are provided for the current reference month. Revised data, based on late responses, are updated for the previous month.

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.

In December, the total value of construction intentions rose in seven provinces, led by Alberta and British Columbia.

Non-residential sector: The commercial component is up

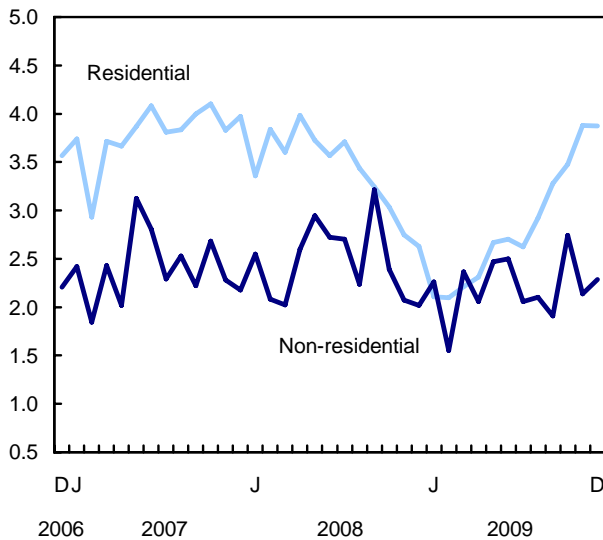
The value of commercial building permits increased for the third straight month, advancing 29.2% to \$1.5 billion in December. The consecutive gains raised the level of construction intentions for commercial buildings to their highest point in 2009. The December increase was largely due to construction intentions for office buildings in Ontario and Alberta.

In the institutional component, municipalities issued permits worth \$514 million in December, down 21.9%. It was the second consecutive decline. Alberta and Ontario posted decreases as a result of a decline in the value of building permits for educational institutions.

After reaching their peak for the year in October 2009, construction intentions in the industrial component were down in December for the second straight month. Intentions declined 19.0% to \$240 million, after falling 57.7% in November. Ontario led the seven provinces that posted lower construction intentions.

Residential and non-residential sectors

\$ billions



Residential sector: Lower intentions for single-family permits

After nine consecutive monthly increases, the value of building permits for single-family dwellings declined 1.3% to \$2.5 billion. The declines in Alberta, Ontario and Saskatchewan more than offset the gains recorded in the other seven provinces. British Columbia and Nova Scotia posted the largest advances in single-family construction intentions.

Municipalities issued \$1.3 billion worth of permits for multi-family dwellings in December, up 2.1% from November. The increase resulted from higher construction intentions in four provinces, including British Columbia and Alberta.

At the national level, municipalities approved the construction of 18,321 new dwellings in December, up 2.4%. The gain was attributable to multi-family dwellings, which rose 5.5% to 9,406 units. The number of single-family dwellings approved declined 0.6% to 8,915 units.

Alberta and British Columbia post the largest gains

The value of building permits was up in seven provinces.

The most significant increases were in Alberta and British Columbia. In Alberta, the advance in the value of permits was attributable to the commercial component and to multi-family dwellings. British Columbia's gain was due to the residential sector.

Manitoba posted the largest drop in December, as a result of declines in both the non-residential and residential sectors. Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador posted declines resulting from their non-residential sectors.

Value of permits down in more than half of all metropolitan areas

The total value of permits fell in 19 of the 34 census metropolitan areas.

The largest declines were in Edmonton and Ottawa. In Edmonton, the increase in multi-family dwellings did not offset declines in all other components. Similarly, Ottawa recorded a decline in every component except permits for commercial buildings.

In contrast, the largest gains were in Calgary, Toronto, Greater Sudbury and Vancouver. In Calgary and Toronto, the increase was due to non-residential building permits and multi-family dwellings. In Greater Sudbury, it was driven by fee increases taking effect in 2010, which raised the number and the value of permits for both the residential and non-residential sectors. In Vancouver, the increase came from the residential sector.

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

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2802.

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

Building permit data for January will be released on March 4.

To order data, contact Jasmine Gaudreault (toll-free 1-800-579-8533; 613-951-6321; bdp_information@statcan.gc.ca). 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.

□

Value of building permits, by province and territory

	December 2008	October 2009	November 2009 ^r	December 2009 ^p	November to December 2009	December 2008 to December 2009
Seasonally adjusted						
	\$ millions				% change	
Canada	4,647.1	6,220.0	6,019.2	6,160.9	2.4	32.6
Residential	2,630.2	3,475.6	3,880.1	3,875.5	-0.1	47.3
Non-residential	2,016.8	2,744.4	2,139.1	2,285.5	6.8	13.3
Newfoundland and Labrador	83.0	68.5	76.1	74.6	-2.0	-10.1
Residential	69.8	41.6	60.4	64.2	6.3	-8.1
Non-residential	13.1	26.9	15.7	10.4	-33.8	-20.8
Prince Edward Island	16.2	14.1	11.2	11.8	4.9	-27.2
Residential	14.2	10.3	7.1	10.0	40.8	-29.8
Non-residential	2.0	3.9	4.2	1.8	-56.3	-7.8
Nova Scotia	102.4	105.7	138.7	104.2	-24.8	1.7
Residential	47.5	61.4	71.4	82.4	15.4	73.5
Non-residential	54.9	44.3	67.3	21.8	-67.5	-60.3
New Brunswick	94.9	90.1	98.2	109.1	11.1	14.9
Residential	41.9	54.4	63.2	54.1	-14.4	29.2
Non-residential	53.0	35.7	35.0	54.9	57.2	3.6
Quebec	1,197.8	1,260.4	1,123.2	1,143.1	1.8	-4.6
Residential	685.9	787.8	791.7	797.4	0.7	16.3
Non-residential	511.9	472.6	331.5	345.8	4.3	-32.5
Ontario	1,770.5	2,101.1	2,345.6	2,348.5	0.1	32.6
Residential	1,065.3	1,236.9	1,506.8	1,438.4	-4.5	35.0
Non-residential	705.2	864.2	838.8	910.2	8.5	29.1
Manitoba	119.8	135.6	187.2	111.1	-40.6	-7.3
Residential	83.6	85.2	116.6	87.9	-24.6	5.1
Non-residential	36.1	50.5	70.6	23.2	-67.2	-35.8
Saskatchewan	138.8	276.8	123.7	150.6	21.7	8.5
Residential	71.0	77.0	79.1	75.4	-4.6	6.3
Non-residential	67.8	199.8	44.7	75.2	68.2	10.8
Alberta	754.6	1,457.6	1,114.7	1,216.1	9.1	61.2
Residential	361.0	635.8	626.9	593.8	-5.3	64.5
Non-residential	393.5	821.8	487.8	622.2	27.6	58.1
British Columbia	357.3	671.0	783.2	884.1	12.9	147.4
Residential	187.0	479.6	542.1	665.8	22.8	255.9
Non-residential	170.3	191.4	241.1	218.3	-9.4	28.2
Yukon	2.7	23.1	8.6	5.6	-34.3	109.0
Residential	2.7	4.9	7.6	5.2	-32.0	93.5
Non-residential	0.0	18.3	0.9	0.4	-52.9	3,890.9
Northwest Territories	9.1	13.7	5.2	2.1	-59.3	-76.7
Residential	0.3	0.5	3.5	0.9	-73.1	270.7
Non-residential	8.9	13.1	1.7	1.2	-31.0	-86.7
Nunavut	0.0	2.2	3.7	0.0	-99.4	...
Residential	0.0	0.4	3.7	0.0	-99.4	...
Non-residential	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0

^r revised

^p preliminary

... not applicable

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

Value of building permits, by census metropolitan area¹

	December 2008	October 2009	November 2009 ^r	December 2009 ^p	November to December 2009	December 2008 to December 2009
Seasonally adjusted						
	\$ millions				% change	
Total	3,491.6	4,601.3	4,550.9	4,677.9	2.8	34.0
St. John's	59.3	37.8	50.8	43.5	-14.3	-26.6
Halifax	28.6	46.9	69.3	33.3	-51.9	16.5
Moncton	20.6	31.9	18.6	51.0	174.9	148.0
Saint John	28.2	16.4	22.1	24.5	10.9	-13.4
Saguenay	170.0	25.2	14.1	7.3	-48.4	-95.7
Québec	101.0	129.3	137.4	115.5	-15.9	14.3
Sherbrooke	18.4	30.9	31.5	19.9	-36.6	8.7
Trois-Rivières	25.8	35.0	40.0	13.4	-66.4	-48.0
Montréal	534.2	577.6	541.5	558.0	3.0	4.5
Ottawa-Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	134.7	190.8	282.4	213.0	-24.6	58.2
Gatineau part	83.6	34.1	35.7	60.7	70.0	-27.4
Ottawa part	51.1	156.6	246.7	152.3	-38.2	198.4
Kingston	10.7	11.5	11.6	19.0	63.3	77.7
Peterborough	6.1	27.9	11.7	13.4	14.4	121.3
Oshawa	19.7	88.5	73.9	64.6	-12.6	228.2
Toronto	1,094.2	1,056.1	1,024.7	1,179.5	15.1	7.8
Hamilton	87.2	60.2	158.9	85.5	-46.2	-1.9
St. Catharines-Niagara	34.6	28.2	75.1	34.9	-53.6	0.7
Kitchener	85.5	79.9	103.3	176.8	71.2	106.8
Brantford	10.9	5.3	4.7	9.4	98.5	-14.1
Guelph	5.2	32.2	32.2	28.4	-11.8	444.1
London	48.1	57.1	110.8	44.1	-60.2	-8.2
Windsor	6.5	36.1	22.8	9.3	-59.0	43.9
Barrie	18.0	38.4	19.2	11.2	-41.8	-38.1
Greater Sudbury	35.0	33.2	21.6	151.7	603.9	332.9
Thunder Bay	5.7	12.7	6.0	3.2	-47.0	-44.4
Winnipeg	84.1	80.2	140.0	67.9	-51.5	-19.3
Regina	42.3	85.6	33.3	64.3	93.1	52.0
Saskatoon	48.3	127.3	47.7	58.0	21.7	20.0
Calgary	200.1	593.6	317.8	546.7	72.0	173.2
Edmonton	286.3	594.3	527.6	316.2	-40.1	10.4
Kelowna	15.8	25.9	33.6	44.6	32.8	181.6
Abbotsford-Mission	3.6	14.0	12.4	12.2	-1.7	240.8
Vancouver	193.3	344.9	485.3	590.5	21.7	205.5
Victoria	29.5	46.4	69.2	66.8	-3.4	126.5

^r revised

^p 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.

Dwelling units, value of residential and non-residential building permits

	December 2008	October 2009	November 2009 ^r	December 2009 ^p	November to December 2009	December 2008 to December 2009
Seasonally adjusted						
	number of units				% change	
Total dwellings	13,729	16,037	17,884	18,321	2.4	33.4
Single ¹	5,999	8,450	8,972	8,915	-0.6	48.6
Multi-family	7,730	7,587	8,912	9,406	5.5	21.7
	value in \$ millions				% change	
Total	4,647.1	6,220.0	6,019.2	6,160.9	2.4	32.6
Residential	2,630.2	3,475.6	3,880.1	3,875.5	-0.1	47.3
Single ¹	1,539.8	2,418.7	2,561.5	2,529.3	-1.3	64.3
Multi-family	1,090.4	1,056.9	1,318.6	1,346.1	2.1	23.5
Non-residential	2,016.8	2,744.4	2,139.1	2,285.5	6.8	13.3
Industrial	420.6	698.9	295.8	239.6	-19.0	-43.0
Commercial	1,089.1	1,128.1	1,185.3	1,531.8	29.2	40.7
Institutional	507.2	917.4	658.1	514.0	-21.9	1.3

^r revised

^p preliminary

1. Included in this category are the following types of dwellings: single-detached, mobile home and cottage.

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

■

Business Conditions Survey: Traveller accommodation industries

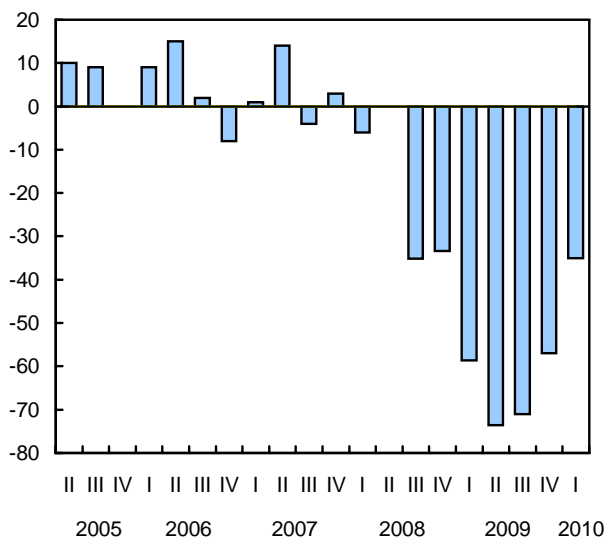
First quarter 2010 (outlook)

Though still negative, Canadian hoteliers' business outlook for the traveller accommodation industries was less pessimistic for the first quarter than it had been in the previous four quarters.

One-half of hotel managers expected occupancy rates in the first quarter of 2010 to be lower than they were in the same quarter last year, while 15% anticipated increases. Thus, the balance of opinion, or the difference between the two, was -35.

Balance of opinion of expected occupancy rates

balance of opinion



Similarly, hoteliers' expectations related to average daily room rates, the number of corporate travellers, the number of hours worked by employees, and the number of room nights booked all continued to be negative for the first quarter, though more positive than they had been since early 2009.

Heading into the first quarter, regional economic conditions, excess room supply, and exchange rate fluctuations continued to top the list of business impediments, according to hotel managers.

Note: The Business Conditions Survey for the traveller accommodation industries is a voluntary survey sent to 1,431 businesses, mostly hotels. The balance of opinion is determined by subtracting the proportion of traveller accommodation businesses that stated their business activity would be lower relative to the same quarter of the previous year, from the proportion who believed their activity would be higher.

The survey is made possible with the support of industry partners, the Canadian Tourism Commission, the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Tourism Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, and Industry Canada.

Available on CANSIM: tables 351-0004 and 351-0005.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5050.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Joan Farnworth (613-951-6303; fax: 613-951-6696; joan.farnworth@statcan.gc.ca), Service Industries Division. □

Traveller accommodation industries

	First quarter 2009	Second quarter 2009	Third quarter 2009	Fourth quarter 2009	First quarter 2010
Anticipated number of room nights booked					
About the same (%)	26	18	19	29	35
Higher (%)	7	3	5	7	16
Lower (%)	67	78	76	64	49
Balance of opinion	-60	-75	-70	-56	-34
Anticipated occupancy rate					
About the same (%)	26	18	18	27	34
Higher (%)	8	4	5	8	15
Lower (%)	66	78	76	65	50
Balance of opinion	-59	-74	-71	-57	-35
Anticipated number of corporate and/or commercial travellers					
About the same (%)	31	24	24	31	44
Higher (%)	4	3	3	6	10
Lower (%)	65	73	74	64	46
Balance of opinion	-61	-70	-71	-58	-37
Anticipated average daily room rate					
About the same (%)	50	33	31	34	45
Higher (%)	13	10	7	7	15
Lower (%)	37	57	62	58	41
Balance of opinion	-23	-46	-55	-51	-26
Anticipated total number of hours worked by employees					
About the same (%)	35	26	32	37	46
Higher (%)	2	2	2	3	8
Lower (%)	63	72	66	60	46
Balance of opinion	-61	-71	-64	-58	-38
	Fourth quarter 2008	First quarter 2009	Second quarter 2009	Third quarter 2009	Fourth quarter 2009
	%				
Business impediments					
Regional economic conditions	46	54	66	64	54
Excess room supply	32	36	37	36	37
Exchange rate fluctuations	40	28	34	27	25
Lack of attractions or complementary facilities in the vicinity	19	20	21	20	22
No difficulties at this time	15	10	8	11	15
Public health	1	0	15	15	14
Shortage of skilled labour	19	11	13	16	12
Shortage of unskilled labour	16	10	11	14	12
Canada's reputation as a desired tourist destination	15	10	13	9	9
Abnormal weather and/or natural disasters	19	8	10	12	8
Security concerns	5	3	3	4	4

Note: Results have been rounded.

Couriers and local messengers industry 2008

The couriers and local messengers industry generated operating revenue of \$8.7 billion in 2008, up 4.2% from 2007. Operating expenses rose at a higher rate, which resulted in a 5.5% decline in operating profit margin. The operating ratio (operating expenses divided by operating revenue) increased from 0.89 to 0.90.

In 2008, the couriers segment, which offers national and international delivery services, accounted for \$7.2 billion in operating revenue, 5.5% higher than the previous year. The 1,987 courier establishments

showed average operating revenue of \$3.6 million and an operating ratio of 0.92. The segment was dominated by a small number of large, multi-establishment businesses. For instance, the five largest courier businesses, which accounted for about 220 establishments, represented 79% of the operating revenue for this segment.

Local messengers offer expedited delivery services within a more restricted geographic area, such as a city, and consist primarily of small, independent contractors. The 17,559 establishments reported \$1.6 billion in operating revenue in 2008, down 1.2% from 2007. These establishments averaged operating revenue

of \$88,000 each and an operating ratio of 0.82. It should be noted that the more modest average operating revenue and the lower operating ratio is mainly attributable to the fact that the segment includes a large contingent of self-employed workers, who do not explicitly pay themselves a salary, but use some of their operating profit as take-home income.

In the industry as a whole, establishments belonging to large- and medium-sized businesses (those with revenue of \$1 million or more) delivered about 713 million packages, generating just over \$6.9 billion in delivery revenue. "Next-day/overnight services" generated the most revenue, 54% of the total, while "two days or more/other delivery services" handled the largest number of pieces, or 49% of the total. Finally, "same day services," the main activity of the local messenger establishments, accounted for about 10% of both delivery revenue and the number of pieces.

Note: The reference year 2008 will be the final release of the Survey of the Couriers and Local Messengers Industry as the survey has been discontinued.

Available on CANSIM: tables 402-0001 to 402-0003.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 4703.

For more information, to order data tables, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-866-500-8400; fax: 613-951-0009; transportationstatistics@statcan.gc.ca), Transportation Division. ■

Real estate agents, brokers, appraisers and other related activities industries 2008

Data on the real estate agents, brokers, appraisers and other real estate activities industries are now available for 2008.

Available on CANSIM: table 352-0005.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 4706.

The publication *Service Bulletin: Real Estate Agents, Brokers, Appraisers and other Real Estate Activities*, 2008 (63-238-X, free), will be available in April.

For more information, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-877-801-3282; 613-951-4612; servicesind@statcan.gc.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Susie Knox (613-951-6042; susie.knox@statcan.gc.ca) or Adib Farhat (613-951-6306; adib.farhat@statcan.gc.ca), Service Industries Division. ■

Postcensal estimates of population for census divisions, census metropolitan areas and economic regions

As of July 1, 2006 to 2009 (preliminary)

Annual demographic estimates by age and sex for census metropolitan areas, census divisions and economic regions from July 1, 2006, to July 1, 2009, are now available.

These estimates are based on the 2006 Census counts adjusted for census net undercoverage (including adjustment for incompletely enumerated Indian reserves and population reviews).

These estimates are based on the 2006 Standard Geographical Classification.

Available on CANSIM: tables 051-0046 to 051-0054.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3608.

The publication *Demographic Estimates: Sub-provincial Areas*, 2004 to 2009 (91-214-X, free), is now available from the *Key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

For more information, to obtain additional data, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-866-767-5611; 613-951-2320; fax: 613-951-2307; demography@statcan.gc.ca), Demography Division. ■

New products and studies

Annual Demographic Estimates: Subprovincial Areas, 2004 to 2009
Catalogue number **91-214-X** (PDF, free; HTML, free)

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

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