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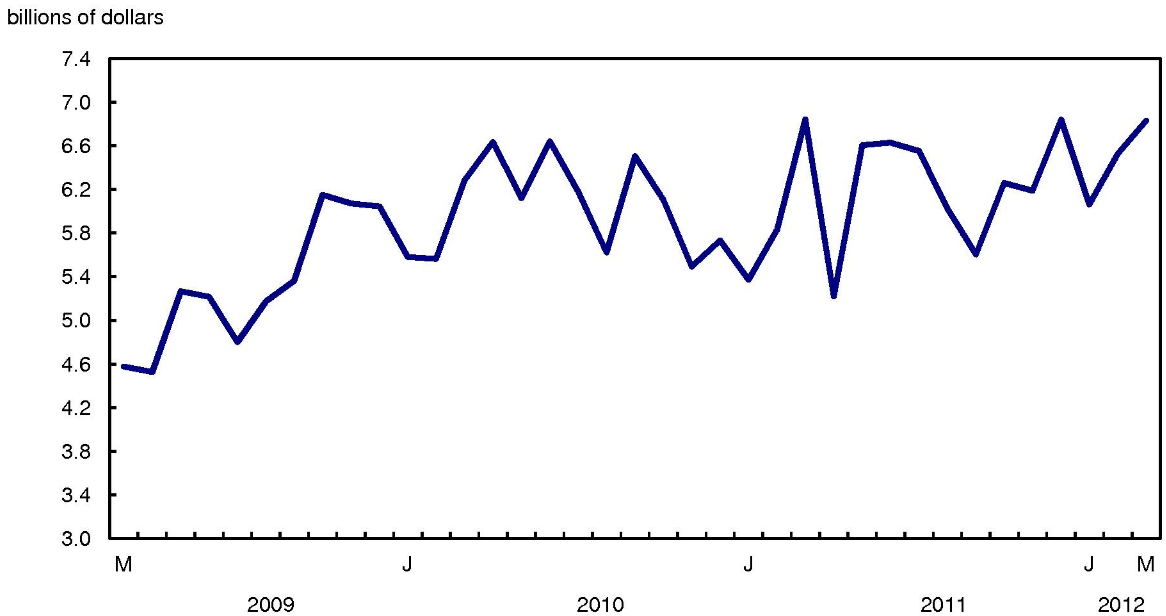
Releases

Releases

Building permits, March 2012

In March, contractors took out building permits worth $6.8 billion, up 4.7% from February following a 7.6% increase the previous month. The gain was the result of higher construction intentions for both institutional and commercial buildings, mostly in Ontario.

Chart 1
Total value of permits



In the non-residential sector, the value of permits rose 13.9% to $2.9 billion, following a 37.7% increase the previous month. This was the highest level since June 2010. Increases in the institutional and commercial components more than offset declines in the industrial component. Most provinces posted advances, with Ontario accounting for most of the growth.

The value of residential permits declined 1.3% to $3.9 billion, the third monthly decrease in a row. Decreases occurred in six provinces, led by Ontario. Alberta posted the largest increase, followed by Nova Scotia.

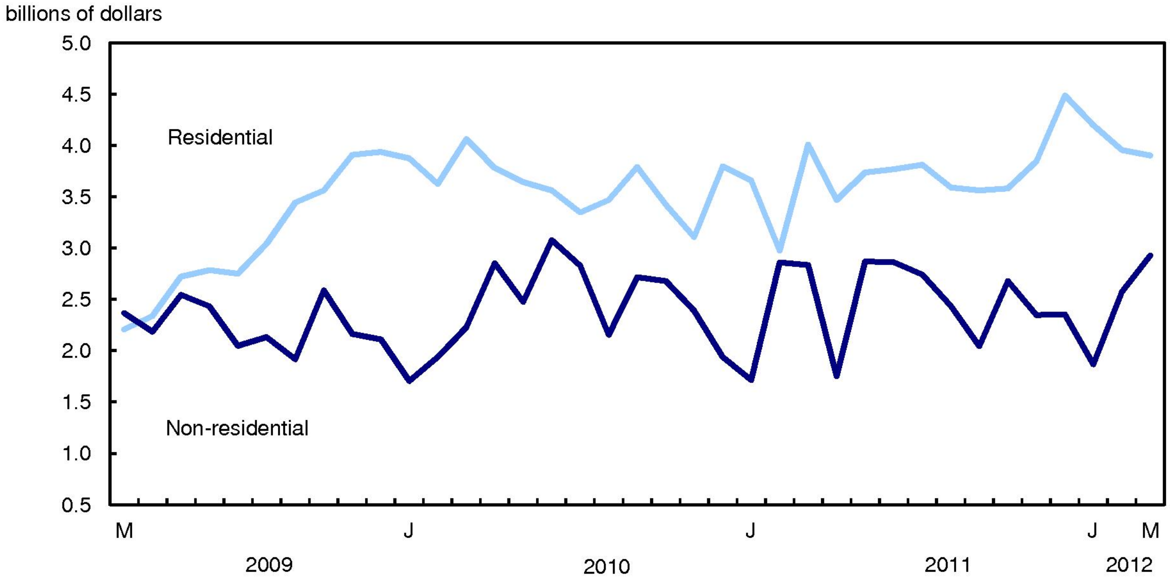
Non-residential sector: Intentions up for institutional and commercial buildings

In the institutional component, construction intentions were up 88.4% to $973 million, following a 64.6% increase the previous month. This was the highest level since October 2011. The advance was mainly the result of higher construction intentions for government buildings and medical facilities in Ontario. In New Brunswick and Saskatchewan, the increase was principally the result of higher intentions for government buildings.

The value of permits for commercial buildings rose 15.3% to $1.5 billion, following a 5.7% increase the month before. The advance originated from higher construction intentions for a variety of structures, including retail complexes, office buildings, warehouses, hotels and restaurants, and laboratories. Increases were reported in seven provinces, led by Ontario and Newfoundland and Labrador.

In the industrial component, intentions fell 42.8% to $408 million. This decline occurred a month after the value of permits for industrial buildings more than doubled. The decline was particularly attributable to lower construction intentions for manufacturing plants in British Columbia, Quebec and Ontario, which posted increases the previous month. Decreases in the industrial component were also posted in three other provinces.

Chart 2
Residential and non-residential sectors



Residential sector: Construction intentions down for both single- and multi-family dwellings

The value of single-family dwelling permits declined 1.7% to $2.3 billion, the third consecutive monthly decrease. Gains in six provinces, led by Alberta, were not enough to offset decreases in the remaining provinces. The largest decline was recorded in Ontario, followed by Newfoundland and Labrador and New Brunswick.

The value of multi-family dwelling permits fell 0.7% to $1.6 billion. Despite three consecutive monthly decreases, this level was 8.6% higher than the monthly average in 2011. Declines occurred in seven provinces, led by Quebec. Alberta reported the largest increase.

Municipalities across Canada issued permits for the construction of 17,650 new dwellings, up 2.1% from February. The increase came from both multi-family dwellings, which rose 2.5% to 10,594 units, and single-family dwellings, which increased 1.4% to 7,056 units.

Increases in most provinces

In March, the value of building permits was up in eight provinces.

Ontario registered the largest increase, as a result of higher construction intentions for institutional buildings and, to a lesser extent, for commercial buildings.

Newfoundland and Labrador and Alberta posted the second- and third-highest gains, respectively. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the increase came from higher construction intentions for commercial and institutional buildings. In Alberta, the advance originated from an increase in the value of permits for residential, industrial and commercial buildings.

British Columbia posted the largest decline, as a result of lower construction intentions for industrial and commercial buildings and multi-family dwellings. Quebec reported decreases in every component except single-family dwellings.

Higher value of permits in most metropolitan areas

The total value of permits rose in 23 of Canada's 34 census metropolitan areas.

The largest increases occurred in Toronto, Winnipeg and St. John's. The advances in both Toronto and St. John's originated from higher construction intentions for institutional and commercial buildings.

In Winnipeg, the gain came from higher construction intentions for both non-residential and residential buildings.

The largest decreases were in Montréal and Edmonton. In Montréal, the decline was mainly attributable to lower intentions for multi-family dwellings and industrial buildings.

Edmonton's decline was the result of a decrease in the value of permits for industrial and institutional buildings and multi-family dwellings.

Note to readers

Unless otherwise stated, this release presents seasonally adjusted data, which facilitates 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 (for example, 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.

Revision

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

Table 1
Dwelling units, value of residential and non-residential building permits, Canada – Seasonally adjusted

	March 2011	January 2012	February 2012[r]	March 2012[p]	February to March 2012	March 2011 to March 2012
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total	**6,840.8**	**6,061.4**	**6,525.1**	**6,829.9**	**4.7**	**-0.2**
Residential	4,006.5	4,193.6	3,953.3	3,901.2	-1.3	-2.6
Single[1]	2,149.0	2,521.9	2,337.2	2,296.7	-1.7	6.9
Multiple	1,857.5	1,671.7	1,616.1	1,604.5	-0.7	-13.6
Non-residential	2,834.3	1,867.8	2,571.8	2,928.7	13.9	3.3
Industrial	330.7	284.6	713.3	408.0	-42.8	23.4
Commercial	1,193.8	1,269.6	1,342.3	1,548.1	15.3	29.7
Institutional	1,309.8	313.7	516.2	972.6	88.4	-25.7
	number of units				% change	
Total dwellings	**17,215**	**17,613**	**17,289**	**17,650**	**2.1**	**2.5**
Single[1]	6,690	7,437	6,956	7,056	1.4	5.5
Multiple	10,525	10,176	10,333	10,594	2.5	0.7

[r] *revised*

[p] *preliminary*

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

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

Table 2
Value of building permits, by province and territory – Seasonally adjusted

	March 2011	January 2012	February 2012[r]	March 2012[p]	February to March 2012	March 2011 to March 2012
	millions of dollars				% change	
Canada	**6,840.8**	**6,061.4**	**6,525.1**	**6,829.9**	**4.7**	**-0.2**
Residential	**4,006.5**	**4,193.6**	**3,953.3**	**3,901.2**	**-1.3**	**-2.6**
Non-residential	**2,834.3**	**1,867.8**	**2,571.8**	**2,928.7**	**13.9**	**3.3**
Newfoundland and Labrador	64.0	100.5	101.7	169.6	66.8	165.1
Residential	51.5	84.3	88.3	74.6	-15.5	44.9
Non-residential	12.5	16.2	13.4	95.0	611.0	661.4
Prince Edward Island	21.8	29.7	8.6	21.9	154.7	0.5
Residential	10.3	18.6	8.2	12.1	48.1	17.3
Non-residential	11.5	11.0	0.4	9.8	…	-14.7
Nova Scotia	128.8	102.0	128.2	142.0	10.7	10.2
Residential	75.4	85.8	64.0	76.3	19.3	1.3
Non-residential	53.5	16.1	64.3	65.7	2.2	22.8
New Brunswick	89.1	60.6	71.9	91.7	27.5	2.9
Residential	40.0	46.9	49.1	36.3	-26.1	-9.1
Non-residential	49.2	13.7	22.8	55.4	142.7	12.7
Quebec	1,224.2	1,157.4	1,378.5	1,230.0	-10.8	0.5
Residential	875.5	825.2	896.7	871.2	-2.8	-0.5
Non-residential	348.7	332.2	481.8	358.8	-25.5	2.9
Ontario	3,222.2	2,544.6	2,254.4	2,773.6	23.0	-13.9
Residential	1,734.2	1,813.3	1,447.9	1,383.5	-4.4	-20.2
Non-residential	1,488.0	731.3	806.5	1,390.1	72.4	-6.6
Manitoba	156.3	202.5	192.7	222.8	15.6	42.6
Residential	82.3	136.7	97.3	100.5	3.2	22.2
Non-residential	74.0	65.8	95.4	122.3	28.2	65.2
Saskatchewan	191.4	206.8	201.3	224.2	11.3	17.1
Residential	103.0	132.5	129.7	126.2	-2.7	22.5
Non-residential	88.4	74.2	71.6	98.0	36.8	10.8
Alberta	878.8	936.7	1,144.6	1,208.2	5.6	37.5
Residential	568.9	581.6	653.8	698.3	6.8	22.7
Non-residential	309.9	355.0	490.8	509.9	3.9	64.6
British Columbia	847.9	714.9	1,037.4	736.8	-29.0	-13.1
Residential	453.8	464.1	515.6	514.4	-0.2	13.4
Non-residential	394.1	250.8	521.8	222.4	-57.4	-43.6
Yukon	7.7	4.3	3.0	4.9	62.2	-36.4
Residential	3.6	4.1	2.3	3.9	68.4	10.7
Non-residential	4.2	0.2	0.7	1.0	41.0	-76.8
Northwest Territories	0.6	1.7	2.7	1.1	-58.7	98.5
Residential	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.7	84.3	311.7
Non-residential	0.4	1.4	2.3	0.4	-81.4	9.8
Nunavut	8.0	0.0	0.0	3.1	...	-61.3
Residential	8.0	0.0	0.0	3.1	...	-61.3
Non-residential	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	...

[r] *revised*
[p] *preliminary*
… *not applicable*
Note(s): *Data may not add to totals as a result of rounding.*

Table 3
Value of building permits, by census metropolitan area – Seasonally adjusted[1]

	March 2011	January 2012	February 2012[r]	March 2012[p]	February to March 2012	March 2011 to March 2012
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total, census metropolitan areas	**5,459.6**	**4,581.4**	**4,738.4**	**5,323.9**	**12.4**	**-2.5**
St. John's	44.2	73.9	72.5	142.4	96.4	222.1
Halifax	61.1	51.6	80.5	87.1	8.2	42.6
Moncton	43.8	20.7	14.1	22.6	60.5	-48.5
Saint John	13.0	15.6	12.8	17.6	37.4	35.6
Saguenay	30.4	17.3	12.9	43.9	239.3	44.2
Québec	132.4	145.0	147.5	176.1	19.4	33.0
Sherbrooke	33.2	35.3	65.9	49.2	-25.3	48.3
Trois-Rivières	25.2	17.9	23.9	29.0	21.2	15.0
Montréal	604.3	539.1	612.6	547.5	-10.6	-9.4
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	133.9	269.2	228.1	198.4	-13.0	48.1
Gatineau part	43.4	38.0	56.1	38.5	-31.3	-11.3
Ottawa part	90.5	231.2	172.0	159.9	-7.1	76.6
Kingston	12.4	10.4	13.6	16.8	23.5	35.4
Peterborough	15.0	7.7	7.8	16.1	105.1	7.1
Oshawa	63.6	47.5	49.5	39.2	-20.7	-38.3
Toronto	2,129.5	1,495.7	1,305.5	1,644.7	26.0	-22.8
Hamilton	88.0	174.5	128.0	159.7	24.8	81.6
St. Catharines–Niagara	63.6	35.9	28.3	38.1	34.7	-40.1
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	206.8	65.6	91.3	133.7	46.5	-35.4
Brantford	5.0	15.0	6.0	11.6	93.2	133.4
Guelph	24.6	42.0	18.5	32.1	73.2	30.4
London	99.2	54.1	59.9	75.9	26.7	-23.4
Windsor	24.9	23.4	50.1	65.9	31.6	165.2
Barrie	40.1	6.5	24.7	13.4	-45.8	-66.6
Greater Sudbury	17.8	4.4	5.2	8.2	58.4	-54.2
Thunder Bay	13.7	3.8	5.6	8.2	45.8	-40.5
Winnipeg	97.7	113.7	82.4	177.3	115.3	81.5
Regina	66.4	61.9	52.7	58.5	11.0	-11.8
Saskatoon	67.2	96.9	97.9	90.1	-7.9	34.0
Calgary	343.3	304.2	444.6	457.7	2.9	33.3
Edmonton	288.7	318.6	401.4	377.5	-6.0	30.8
Kelowna	49.9	8.1	19.5	36.3	86.3	-27.4
Abbotsford–Mission	15.4	17.8	18.5	13.9	-25.0	-9.9
Vancouver	565.4	448.1	489.1	482.1	-1.4	-14.7
Victoria	40.1	40.2	67.7	53.4	-21.1	33.2

r *revised*

p *preliminary*

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

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

Available without charge in CANSIM: tables 026-0001 to 026-0008 and 026-0010.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2802.

The March 2012 issue of *Building Permits* (64-001-X, free) will soon be available.

The April building permits data will be released on June 5.

For more information, contact Statistics Canada's National Contact Centre (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 613-951-8116; infostats@statcan.gc.ca).

To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Mariane Nozière Bien-Aimé (613-951-7520), Investment, Science and Technology Division.

Stocks of principal field crops, as of March 31, 2012

As of March 31, total stocks of canola and wheat were down compared with the same date in 2011. Total stocks of corn for grain and soybeans increased to record levels.

Despite a record harvest of canola in 2011, total stocks stood at 4.3 million metric tonnes as of March 31, 2012, down 30.6% or 1.9 million tonnes from the same date in 2011. The drop was primarily in on-farm stocks, where levels fell by 1.7 million tonnes.

Total wheat stocks declined 8.4%, or 1.3 million tonnes, to 14.5 million tonnes. This decline occurred despite a 9.0% increase in the production of wheat in 2011. Commercial stocks increased 10.8% to 4.7 million tonnes, while on-farm stocks fell 15.3% to 9.8 million tonnes.

Despite an 8.8% decrease in the production of corn for grain in 2011, stocks rose 8.1% from 2011 to a record 6.2 million tonnes in 2012. This level was 2.5% higher than the previous record of 6.0 million tonnes in March 2009. Commercial stocks were down slightly from March 2011 levels, while on-farm stocks were up 13.3% to 4.4 million tonnes.

Soybean storage was also at a record level in March 2012, as total stocks increased 19.0% to 1.9 million tonnes. Soybean production fell 2.3% in 2011 from a record high the previous year. The increase in total stocks was concentrated on farms, where stocks rose 34.4%.

Note to readers

The March Farm Survey of 13,400 farmers concerning, among others, stocks of principal field crops was conducted from March 23 to 30, 2012. Farmers were asked to report the amounts of grain, oilseeds and special crops in storage on their farm. Data on commercial stocks of western major crops originate from the Canadian Grain Commission. Commercial stocks of corn and soybeans are estimated on the basis of a sample of grain elevators in Eastern Canada. Data on commercial stocks of special crops come from a survey of handlers and agents of special crops.

National supply-disposition tables for the major grains and special crops are included in this report and will be included in future production and stock reports. Methodology details are published annually in the October issue of Cereals and Oilseeds Review (22-007-X, free).

Stocks data are subject to revision during the two years following their initial publication. Revisions are published in the July stocks report, which is released in September.

Table 1
Total stocks of principal field crops at March 31

	2010	2011	2012	2010 to 2011	2011 to 2012
	thousands of tonnes			% change	
Total wheat	17 106	15 803	14 479	-7.6	-8.4
Wheat excluding durum	12 343	12 747	11 477	3.3	-10.0
Durum wheat	4 763	3 056	3 002	-35.8	-1.8
Corn for grain	5 856	5 718	6 179	-2.4	8.1
Canola	6 462	6 157	4 273	-4.7	-30.6
Barley	5 096	3 540	3 140	-30.5	-11.3
Soybeans	1 490	1 574	1 873	5.6	19.0
Oats	2 066	1 694	1 323	-18.0	-21.9
Lentils	405	1 140	1 184	181.5	3.9
Dry field peas	2 055	1 670	798	-18.7	-52.2
Flaxseed	596	369	262	-38.1	-29.0
Mustard seed	165	185	152	12.1	-17.8
Rye	196	132	54	-32.7	-59.1
Canary seed	164	125	44	-23.8	-64.8
Chickpeas	65	65	43	0.0	-33.8
Sunflower seed	72	58	14	-19.4	-75.9

Available without charge in CANSIM: tables 001-0010, 001-0017 and 001-0040 to 001-0043.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers 3401, 3403, 3443, 3464 and 3476.

The publication *Field Crop Reporting Series:* "Stocks of principal field crops at March 31, 2012," Vol. 91, no. 3 (22-002-X, free), is now available from the *Key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

Preliminary data on principal field crop areas will be released on June 27.

For more information, contact Statistics Canada's National Contact Centre (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 613-951-8116; infostats@statcan.gc.ca).

To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Yves Gilbert (613-951-2577; yves.gilbert@statcan.gc.ca) or Craig Byrd (613-951-5138; craig.byrd@statcan.gc.ca), Agriculture Division.

New products and studies

New products

Field Crop Reporting Series, Stocks of Principal Field Crops at March 31, 2012, Vol. 91, no. 3
Catalogue number 22-002-X (HTML, free | PDF, free)

Industry Price Indexes, March 2012, Vol. 38, no. 3
Catalogue number 62-011-X (HTML, free | PDF, free)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