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Wholesale trade, February 2015

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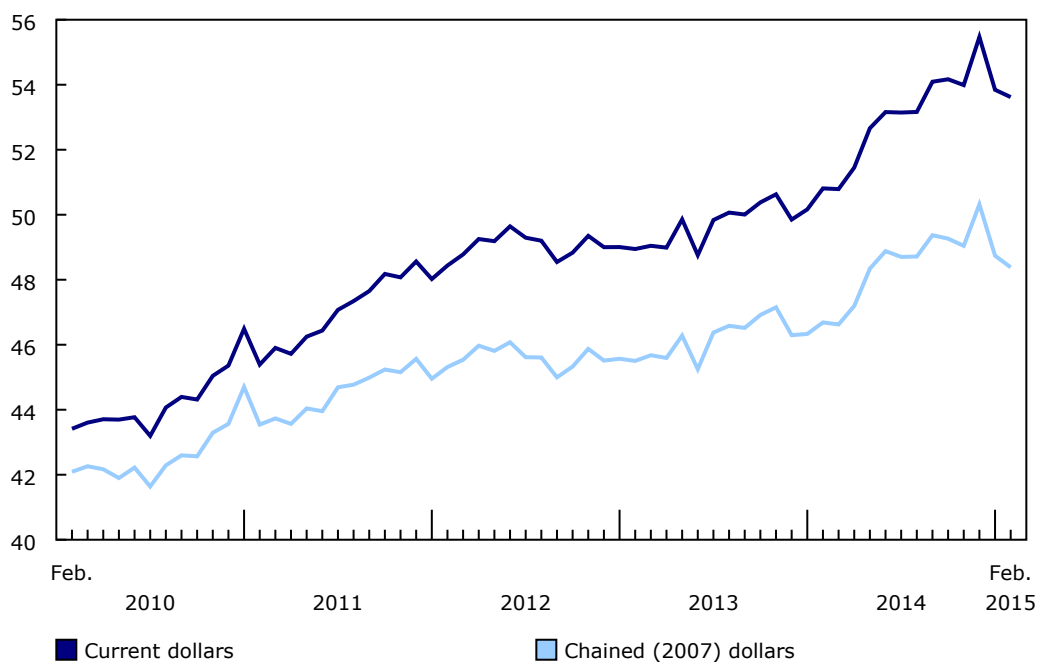
Wholesale trade, February 2015

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In volume terms, wholesale sales were down 0.7%.

Chart 1 Wholesale sales decrease in February

billions of dollars



Source(s): CANSIM tables [081-0011](#) and [081-0015](#).

Lower sales in three subsectors

The building material and supplies subsector recorded the largest decrease in dollar terms in February, down 2.7% to \$7.4 billion, its lowest level since May 2014. Every industry within this subsector contributed to the decrease, led by a second consecutive monthly decline in the electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies industry (-5.2%).

In the machinery, equipment and supplies subsector, sales decreased 1.3% to \$11.2 billion, their lowest level in seven months. The decline was attributable to the construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies industry, which fell 6.2% to \$3.6 billion, its lowest level since December 2013.

Following an 11.3% decline in January, sales in the motor vehicle and parts subsector decreased 1.4% to \$8.8 billion in February, their lowest level in 10 months. The decline was attributable to the motor vehicle industry, which decreased 2.7% to \$6.3 billion, its lowest level since April 2014. Imports and exports of passenger cars and light trucks, as well as sales from motor vehicle manufacturers, were lower in February.

Sales rose for the sixth time in seven months in the miscellaneous subsector, increasing 2.1% to \$7.4 billion. The agricultural supplies industry (+9.3%) led the gain with its fifth increase in six months, reaching its highest level since May 2008.

The food, beverage and tobacco subsector rose 0.4% to \$10.5 billion, a fourth consecutive monthly gain. Higher sales in the food industry (+0.7%) more than offset the decline in the beverage industry (-6.6%). February's decrease in the beverage industry offset most of the 7.1% gain in January.

Sales in the farm product subsector rose 5.1% to \$721 million, partially offsetting the decline in January.

Sales down in four provinces

Sales declined in four provinces in February, accounting for 79% of wholesale sales. In dollar terms, Ontario contributed the most to the decline.

Sales in Ontario decreased 1.2% to \$25.8 billion, a second consecutive monthly decline, led by lower sales in the motor vehicle and parts subsector.

In Alberta, sales declined for the second time in three months, down 1.7% to \$7.0 billion. The personal and household goods subsector and the building material and supplies subsector contributed the most to the decline.

Sales in Quebec decreased 1.0% to \$9.7 billion, the fourth decrease in five months. The machinery, equipment and supplies subsector was one of several that contributed to the decline.

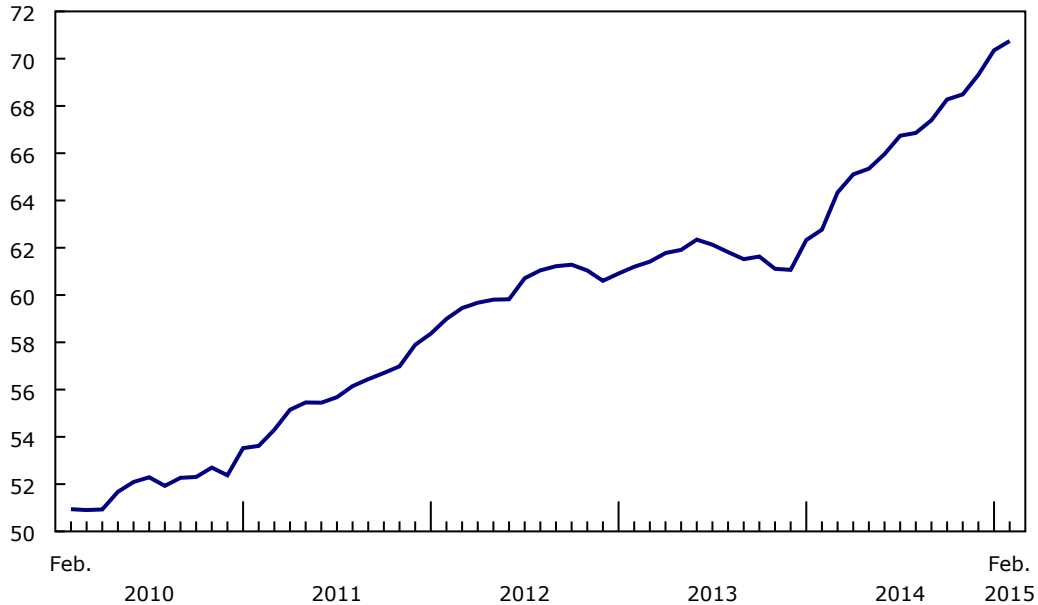
In Saskatchewan, sales rose for the sixth time in seven months, up 7.3% to \$2.5 billion, the highest level on record, on the strength of gains in the miscellaneous subsector.

Inventories increase in February

Inventories rose 0.6% to \$70.7 billion in February, a 14th consecutive monthly increase. Gains were recorded in five of seven subsectors, representing 68% of wholesale inventories.

Chart 2
Wholesale inventories increase in February

billions of dollars



Source(s): CANSIM table [081-0012](#).

The personal and household goods subsector (+1.9%) recorded a third consecutive monthly increase as well as the largest gain in dollar terms.

Inventories in the miscellaneous subsector (+1.0%) rose for the 12th time in 13 months, while inventories in the machinery, equipment and supplies subsector (+0.3%) rose for the 12th time in 14 months.

The inventory-to-sales ratio rose from 1.31 in January to 1.32 in February. The inventory-to-sales ratio is a measure of the time in months required to exhaust inventories if sales were to remain at their current level.

Note to readers

All data in this release are seasonally adjusted and in current dollars, unless otherwise noted. For more information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonally adjusted data – Frequently asked questions](#).

Total wholesale sales expressed in volume are calculated by deflating current dollar values using relevant price indexes. The wholesale sales series in chained (2007) dollars is a chained Fisher volume index with 2007 as the reference year. For more information, see [Sales in volume for Wholesale Trade](#).

The Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey covers all industries within the wholesale sector as defined by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), with the exception of oilseed and grain merchant wholesalers (NAICS 4112), petroleum and petroleum products merchant wholesalers (NAICS 412) and business-to-business electronic markets, and agents and brokers (NAICS 419).

Table 1
Wholesale merchants' sales by industry – Seasonally adjusted

	February 2014	January 2015 ^r	February 2015 ^p	January to February 2015	February 2014 to February 2015
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total, wholesale sales (current dollars)	50,810	53,844	53,620	-0.4	5.5
Total, wholesale sales (2007 chained dollars)	46,686	48,740	48,382	-0.7	3.6
Total wholesale sales (current dollars), excluding motor vehicle and parts	42,374	44,911	44,812	-0.2	5.8
Farm product	648	686	721	5.1	11.2
Food, beverage and tobacco	10,003	10,510	10,547	0.4	5.4
Food	9,006	9,454	9,517	0.7	5.7
Beverage	494	529	495	-6.6	0.0
Cigarette and tobacco product	502	527	535	1.6	6.6
Personal and household goods	7,353	7,467	7,509	0.6	2.1
Textile, clothing and footwear	958	934	969	3.7	1.1
Home entertainment equipment and household appliance	809	740	735	-0.7	-9.2
Home furnishings	472	493	505	2.3	6.9
Personal goods	751	747	784	4.9	4.3
Pharmaceuticals and pharmacy supplies	3,665	3,875	3,839	-0.9	4.8
Toiletries, cosmetics and sundries	697	677	678	0.1	-2.8
Motor vehicle and parts	8,437	8,932	8,808	-1.4	4.4
Motor vehicle	6,171	6,443	6,271	-2.7	1.6
New motor vehicle parts and accessories	2,212	2,440	2,486	1.9	12.4
Used motor vehicle parts and accessories	54	49	50	2.2	-7.2
Building material and supplies	7,082	7,658	7,449	-2.7	5.2
Electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies	2,141	2,433	2,307	-5.2	7.7
Metal service centres	1,638	1,628	1,551	-4.7	-5.3
Lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies	3,302	3,598	3,591	-0.2	8.8
Machinery, equipment and supplies	10,732	11,351	11,198	-1.3	4.3
Farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment	1,346	1,340	1,366	1.9	1.5
Construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies	3,632	3,840	3,601	-6.2	-0.9
Computer and communications equipment and supplies	3,383	3,590	3,630	1.1	7.3
Other machinery, equipment and supplies	2,371	2,581	2,602	0.8	9.7
Miscellaneous	6,556	7,239	7,389	2.1	12.7
Recyclable material	722	812	775	-4.6	7.4
Paper, paper product and disposable plastic product	898	913	904	-1.1	0.6
Agricultural supplies	1,858	2,119	2,316	9.3	24.7
Chemical (except agricultural) and allied product	1,227	1,356	1,326	-2.3	8.0
Other miscellaneous	1,851	2,038	2,068	1.5	11.8

^r revised

^p preliminary

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

Source(s): CANSIM tables [081-0011](#) and [081-0015](#).

Table 2
Wholesale merchants' sales by province and territory – Seasonally adjusted

	February 2014	January 2015 ^r	February 2015 ^p	January to February 2015	February 2014 to February 2015
	millions of dollars			% change	
Canada	50,810	53,844	53,620	-0.4	5.5
Newfoundland and Labrador	401	429	437	1.7	8.9
Prince Edward Island	61	62	60	-3.5	-1.4
Nova Scotia	690	740	739	-0.0	7.1
New Brunswick	503	521	523	0.4	3.8
Quebec	9,446	9,810	9,711	-1.0	2.8
Ontario	24,507	26,094	25,793	-1.2	5.2
Manitoba	1,405	1,501	1,528	1.8	8.7
Saskatchewan	2,024	2,375	2,547	7.3	25.9
Alberta	6,836	7,091	6,971	-1.7	2.0
British Columbia	4,846	5,149	5,245	1.9	8.2
Yukon	12	11	11	-3.2	-9.8
Northwest Territories	69	51	48	-7.0	-31.0
Nunavut	9	10	8	-20.8	-13.2

^r revised

^p preliminary

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

Source(s): CANSIM table [081-0011](#).

Table 3
Wholesale merchants' inventories by industry – Seasonally adjusted

	February 2014	January 2015 ^r	February 2015 ^p	January to February 2015	February 2014 to February 2015
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total, wholesale inventories	62,766	70,353	70,748	0.6	12.7
Farm product	259 ^E	F	F	F	F
Food, beverage and tobacco	5,617	6,412	6,422	0.2	14.3
Food	5,022	5,840	5,847	0.1	16.4
Beverage	349	334	340	1.9	-2.6
Cigarette and tobacco product	247	238	235	-1.2	-4.7
Personal and household goods	10,987	11,950	12,180	1.9	10.9
Textile, clothing and footwear	1,974	2,091	2,110	0.9	6.9
Home entertainment equipment and household appliance	799	801	820	2.4	2.6
Home furnishings	1,193	1,228	1,247 ^E	1.5	4.5
Personal goods	1,305	1,482	1,490	0.6	14.2
Pharmaceuticals and pharmacy supplies	4,937	5,646	5,823	3.1	17.9
Toiletries, cosmetics and sundries	780	703	690	-1.8	-11.5
Motor vehicle and parts	8,304	9,595	9,574	-0.2	15.3
Motor vehicle	4,549	5,381	5,416	0.6	19.1
New motor vehicle parts and accessories	3,642	4,106	4,049	-1.4	11.2
Used motor vehicle parts and accessories	114	108	109	1.1	-4.0
Building material and supplies	11,198	12,821	12,825	0.0	14.5
Electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies	3,033	3,307	3,325	0.5	9.6
Metal service centres	3,235	3,873	3,842	-0.8	18.8
Lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies	4,930	5,641	5,658	0.3	14.8
Machinery, equipment and supplies	18,429	20,209	20,260	0.3	9.9
Farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment	4,164	4,497	4,453	-1.0	6.9
Construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies	9,109	10,009	10,069	0.6	10.5
Computer and communications equipment and supplies	1,621	1,911	1,954	2.3	20.6
Other machinery, equipment and supplies	3,535	3,792	3,784	-0.2	7.0
Miscellaneous	7,972	9,064	9,155	1.0	14.8
Recyclable material	529	627	576	-8.2	8.9
Paper, paper product and disposable plastic product	711	717	721	0.5	1.4
Agricultural supplies	3,156	3,868	3,914	1.2	24.0
Chemical (except agricultural) and allied product	1,038	1,315	1,346	2.4	29.7
Other miscellaneous	2,538	2,536	2,598	2.4	2.4

^r revised

^p preliminary

^E use with caution

^F too unreliable to be published

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

Source(s): CANSIM table [081-0012](#).

Available in CANSIM: tables [081-0011](#), [081-0012](#) and [081-0015](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [2401](#).

The February 2015 issue of *Wholesale Trade* ([63-008-X](#)) will soon be available.

Wholesale trade data for March will be released on May 20.

For more information, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca).

For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Elspeth Hazell (613-951-8090; elspeth.hazell@statcan.gc.ca), Manufacturing and Wholesale Trade Division.

Job vacancies in brief, three-month average ending in January 2015

Canadian businesses reported 225,000 job vacancies in January, up 33,000 compared with January 2014. For every job vacancy, there were 5.5 unemployed people, down from 6.8 the same month one year earlier. This decline in the ratio was the result of both fewer unemployed people and more job vacancies.

The national job vacancy rate was 1.5% in January, up from 1.3% recorded 12 months earlier.

For 2014 as a whole, there was an average of 230,000 job vacancies per month among Canadian businesses, little changed compared with 2013.

For every job vacancy, there were 5.8 unemployed people in 2014, down from 6.2 in 2013. The decline in the unemployment-to-job vacancies ratio was the result of fewer unemployed people, as the number of job vacancies was little changed. In 2012, the ratio was 5.5 unemployed people for every job vacancy.

Note to readers

Monthly data are based on three-month moving averages. For example, data for the current month are based on an average of the data from the current month and the previous two months.

Data on job vacancies are not seasonally adjusted and should only be compared on a year-over-year basis. Given this is a new data series, long-term trends are not yet available; therefore, data should be interpreted with caution.

With each release, data for the current reference month are subject to revision. Data have been revised for the previous month. Users are encouraged to request and use the most up-to-date data for each month.

The differences between estimates presented in the text are statistically significant at the 68% confidence level.

Historical revisions

With this release, the Job Vacancy Statistics data series have been historically revised. This is the result of revisions to the Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours data, which are the source for job vacancy statistics, as well as revisions to the Labour Force Survey data, which are the source for unemployment data.

Available in CANSIM: tables [284-0001 to 284-0004](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5202](#).

The job vacancies release for February will be on May 19.

An updated issue of the *Guide to Job Vacancy Statistics (72-210-G)* was released on March 31 and is available from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca).

Natural gas sales, February 2015

Natural gas sales totalled 10.6 billion cubic metres in February, up 3.9% from February 2014.

The volume of sales to the residential (-1.4%) sector was down, while the commercial (+3.6%) and industrial (+7.2%) sectors were up compared with the same month a year earlier.

Total sales in February were 3.7% lower compared with the previous month.

Note to readers

These data are subject to revision.

Table 1
Natural gas sales

	February 2014	January 2015	February 2015 ^P	January to February 2015	February 2014 to February 2015
	thousands of cubic metres			% change	
Total sales	10 179 073	10 979 726	10 571 092	-3.7	3.9
Residential ¹	3 052 541	3 124 785	3 008 520	-3.7	-1.4
Commercial ²	2 116 753	2 168 187	2 192 776	1.1	3.6
Industrial ³ and direct sales ⁴	5 009 779	5 686 754	5 369 796	-5.6	7.2

^P preliminary

1. Gas sold for domestic purposes, including space heating, water heating and cooking, to a residential dwelling unit.

2. Gas sold to customers engaged in wholesale or retail trade, governments, institutions, office buildings, etc.

3. Gas sold to customers engaged in a process that creates or changes raw or unfinished materials into another form or product. Includes mining and manufacturing establishments. Includes firm, interruptible and buy/sell agreements.

4. Represents direct, non-utility sales for consumption, where the utility acts solely as the transporter.

Source(s): Survey on Gas Utilities/Transportation and Distribution Systems (2149).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2149.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca).

Investment in new housing construction, February 2015

Investment in new housing construction increased 2.4% to \$3.5 billion in February compared with the same month in 2014.

The increase came mainly from higher spending on row house and apartment building construction. Investment in row house construction rose 9.1% to \$348 million, while spending on apartment and apartment-condominium buildings advanced 2.2% to \$1.1 billion.

Spending on semi-detached dwellings (+11.2% to \$194 million) also contributed to the national advance. Investment in single-family dwellings edged up 0.5% to \$1.8 billion.

At the provincial level, Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario posted the largest year-over-year advances.

In Alberta, total investment in new dwellings increased 13.4% to \$902 million. In British Columbia, spending was up 10.4% to \$622 million, while in Ontario, investment rose 1.7% to \$1.2 billion.

In contrast, the largest decrease occurred in Quebec, followed by Saskatchewan and Newfoundland and Labrador. In Quebec, spending on new residential building construction was down 10.7% to \$468 million. In Saskatchewan, investment declined 10.7% to \$123 million and in Newfoundland and Labrador, investment was down 25.8% to \$40 million.

Note to readers

Data on investment in new housing construction (including single-family dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, row housing, apartments and condominiums) are not seasonally adjusted and all comparisons in this release are between February 2014 and February 2015.

Data in CANSIM are available at the national and provincial levels, in both current and constant dollars (base year 2007).

Unless otherwise specified, the highlights refer to current dollars and are ranked in terms of dollar change rather than percentage change.

Estimates for investment in new housing construction are periodically revised when quarterly residential investment data are released.

Available in CANSIM: table [026-0017](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5155](#).

For more information, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca).

To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Mariane Bien-Aimé (613-951-7520; mariane.bien-aime@statcan.gc.ca), Investment, Science and Technology Division.

Civil aviation operating statistics, February 2015

The two major Canadian air carriers flew 3.6 million passengers on their scheduled and charter services in February, up 11.9% from the same month in 2014. On average, each passenger travelled 2 646 kilometres, up 1.7% compared with February 2014.

Both Air Canada and WestJet increased their passenger capacity and traffic in February. Capacity advanced 11.5% on a year-over-year basis to 11.6 billion available seat-kilometres, as international growth (+16.0%) for scheduled services outstripped domestic growth (+1.0%). Traffic totalled 9.6 billion passenger-kilometres, up 13.9%.

The volume of turbo fuel consumed totalled 381.7 million litres, up 5.6% from the same month a year earlier.

Note to readers

Data for Air Canada rouge, which began operations on July 1, 2013, were included in the February 2015 data for Air Canada, but were not included in the February 2014 data for Air Canada.

Data in this monthly release are not seasonally adjusted.

Available in CANSIM: tables [401-0001](#) and [401-0043](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5026](#).

A [summary table](#) is also available from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website under *Summary tables*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca).

New products and studies

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