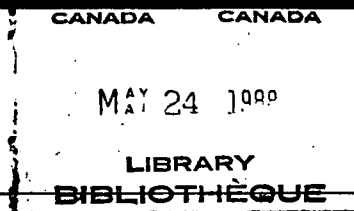


The Daily

Statistics Canada

Tuesday, May 24, 1988



Major Releases

Wholesale Trade, March 1988

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- Wholesale merchants' sales increased 16.1% over March 1987.

Sales of Natural Gas, March 1988

4

- Sales of natural gas in Canada totalled 5 541.3 million cubic metres, up 4.3% from a year earlier.

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Plastic Film and Bags, First Quarter 1988

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Major Releases

Wholesale Trade 1988

- Preliminary estimates indicate that wholesale merchants' sales for March 1988 were 16.1% above those of March 1987. In the first three months of 1988, cumulative sales were up 13.3% compared to the corresponding period in 1987.
- In March 1988, all major trade groups within wholesale trade registered increased sales over a year earlier. The three largest trade groups recorded the following increases over March 1987: wholesalers of electrical and non-electrical machinery, equipment and supplies (+23.4%); wholesalers of food (+4.2%); and other wholesalers (+24.4%).
- Wholesale trade increases between March 1987 and March 1988 were posted in all regions, ranging from 24.0% in the Prairies to 10.3% in British Columbia, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

Inventories

- Inventory levels in March 1988 were 12.0% higher than those reported in March 1987. The ratio of inventories to sales at the end of March 1988 stood at 1.66:1, down slightly from 1.69:1 recorded in the corresponding month of 1987.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 44.

The March 1988 issue of *Wholesale Trade* (63-008, \$5.50/\$55) will be available the third week of June. See "How to Order Publications".

For more detailed information on this release, contact Gilles Simard (613-951-3541), Wholesale Trade Section, Industry Division.

Wholesale Trade

Percentage Change in Sales and Inventories for March 1988/1987

Major Trade Groups - Regions	Sales			Inventories		Stocks/Sales Ratios	
	Feb. 1988/87 ^r	March 1988/87 ^p	Jan.-Mar. 1988/87 ^p	Feb. 1988/87 ^r	Mar. 1988/87 ^p	March 1987	March 1988 ^p
Total all trades	11.9	16.1	13.3	10.2	12.0	1.69	1.66
Food	3.5	4.2	2.8	2.9	2.7	0.77	0.75
Tobacco, drugs and toilet preparations	3.8	8.3	7.1	0.2	1.7	0.97	0.92
Apparel, dry goods, furniture and general merchandise	-5.3	1.6	-1.7	12.4	15.8	1.71	2.14
Motor vehicles and accessories	2.2	7.5	7.2	9.4	8.4	2.15	2.23
Farm machinery, equipment and supplies	17.1	33.3	16.9	4.3	3.9	4.33	3.62
Other machinery, equipment and supplies ¹	24.0	23.4	20.8	5.8	9.3	1.79	1.57
Metals, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment	23.0	28.8	23.9	12.7	16.1	1.81	1.69
Lumber and building materials	8.5	10.1	9.5	29.3	28.1	1.79	2.06
Other wholesalers ²	12.2	24.4	19.4	13.8	17.4	1.76	1.75
Regions							
Atlantic provinces	13.3	19.1	15.4	11.1	14.1	1.61	1.60
Quebec	14.2	16.9	14.5	15.7	15.1	1.62	1.64
Ontario	7.2	14.6	11.3	9.9	12.1	1.61	1.62
Prairie provinces	23.9	24.0	20.4	6.3	9.2	2.37	2.06
B.C., Yukon and Northwest Territories	9.5	10.3	9.1	6.0	9.2	1.41	1.66

¹ Includes: electrical machinery, equipment and supplies; and machinery and equipment, n.e.s.

² Includes: farm products (excluding grain); paper and paper products; scrap and waste materials; and wholesalers, n.e.s.

^r Revised estimates.

^p Preliminary estimates.

Sales of Natural Gas

March 1988

Sales of natural gas (including direct sales) in Canada during March 1988 totalled 5 541.3 million cubic metres, a 4.3% increase from the level recorded the previous year.

On the basis of rate structure information, sales in March 1988 were broken down as follows, with the percentage changes from March 1987 in brackets: residential sales, 1 684.2 million cubic metres (+ 8.2%); commercial sales, 1 399.9 million cubic metres (+ 7.3%) and industrial sales (including direct sales) 2 457.3 million cubic metres (+ 0.2%).

Year-to-date figures for the first three months of 1988 indicate that sales of natural gas in Canada amounted to 18 173.0 million cubic metres, a 9.6% increase from the level recorded during the same period of 1987.

On the basis of rate structure information, year-to-date sales were broken down as follows, with the percentage changes from the corresponding period in 1987 in brackets: residential sales, 5 702.2 million cubic metres (+ 11.7%); commercial sales, 4 708.6 million cubic metres (+ 11.8%) and industrial sales (including direct sales) 7 762.2 million cubic metres (+ 6.8%).

The March 1988 issue of *Gas Utilities* (55-002, \$11.50/\$115) will be available the third week of June. See "How to Order Publications".

For more detailed information on this release, contact Gary Smalldridge (613-951-3567), Energy Section, Industry Division.

Sales of Natural Gas

March 1988 (Preliminary Data)

	Rate structure				
	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Direct	Total
	(thousands of cubic metres)				
New Brunswick	-	-	-	-	-
Quebec	102 091	181 389	316 647	7 940	608 067
Ontario	889 308	650 450	870 689	109 136	2 519 583
Manitoba	89 812	87 907	43 078	-	220 797
Saskatchewan	100 637	83 703	30 000	55 000	269 340
Alberta	334 980	255 753	818 161	-	1 408 894
British Columbia	167 358	140 655	149 704	56 900	514 617
March 1988 - Canada	1 684 186	1 399 857	2 228 279	228 976	5 541 298
March 1987 - Canada	1 556 119	1 304 902	2 299 396	153 027	5 313 444
% change	8.2	7.3		0.2	4.3
Year to date 1988 - Canada	5 702 150	4 708 637	6 960 514	801 710	18 173 011
Year to date 1987 - Canada	5 104 602	4 210 921	6 843 226	422 766	16 581 515
% change	11.7	11.8		6.8	9.6

- Nil.

Note: Revised figures will be available in *Gas Utilities* (55-002) as well as on CANSIM.

Data Availability Announcement

Plastic Film and Bags First Quarter 1988

Figures for the first quarter of 1988 on shipments of plastic film and bags are now available.

Shipments of Plastic Film and Bags Manufactured from Resin (47-007, \$6.25/\$25) will be available in June 1988. See "How to Order Publications".

For more detailed information on this release, contact T. Raj Sehdev (613-951-3513), Industry Division.

**The
Daily**

Statistics Canada's Official Release Bulletin for Statistical Information

Catalogue 11-001E. Price: Canada \$100/year; other countries \$125/year

Published by the Communications Division (Director - Douglas Newson)
Statistics Canada, 3-N, R.H. Coats Bldg., Ottawa K1A 0T6.

Senior Editor: Greg Thomson (613-951-1116)

Editor: Deanna Jamieson (613-951-1103)

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The Daily, May 24, 1988

Publications Released

Gross Domestic Product by Industry,
February 1988. Catalogue number 15-001
(Canada: \$11.50/\$115; Other Countries:
\$12.50/\$125).

**Inventories, Shipments and Orders in
Manufacturing Industries,** February 1988.
Catalogue number 31-001
(Canada: \$16.50/\$165; Other Countries:
\$17.50/\$175).

**Stocks of Food Commodities in Cold
Storage and Other Warehouses,** 1987.
Catalogue number 32-217
(Canada: \$30; Other Countries: \$31.50).

Furniture and Fixtures Industries, 1985.
Catalogue number 35-251
(Canada: \$30; Other Countries: \$31.50).

**Electrical and Electronic Products
Industries,** 1985. Catalogue number 43-250
(Canada: \$30; Other Countries: \$31.50).

Gas Utilities, January 1988:
Catalogue number 55-002
(Canada: \$11.50/\$115; Other Countries:
\$12.50/\$125).

Telephone Statistics, January 1988.
Catalogue number 56-002
(Canada: \$7.50/\$75; Other Countries:
\$8.50/\$85).

Electric Power Statistics, February 1988.
Catalogue number 57-001
(Canada: \$9/\$90; Other Countries: \$10/\$100).

**Capital and Repair Expenditures -
Manufacturing Sub-industries,** Intentions
1988. Catalogue number 61-214
(Canada: \$15; Other Countries: \$16).

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