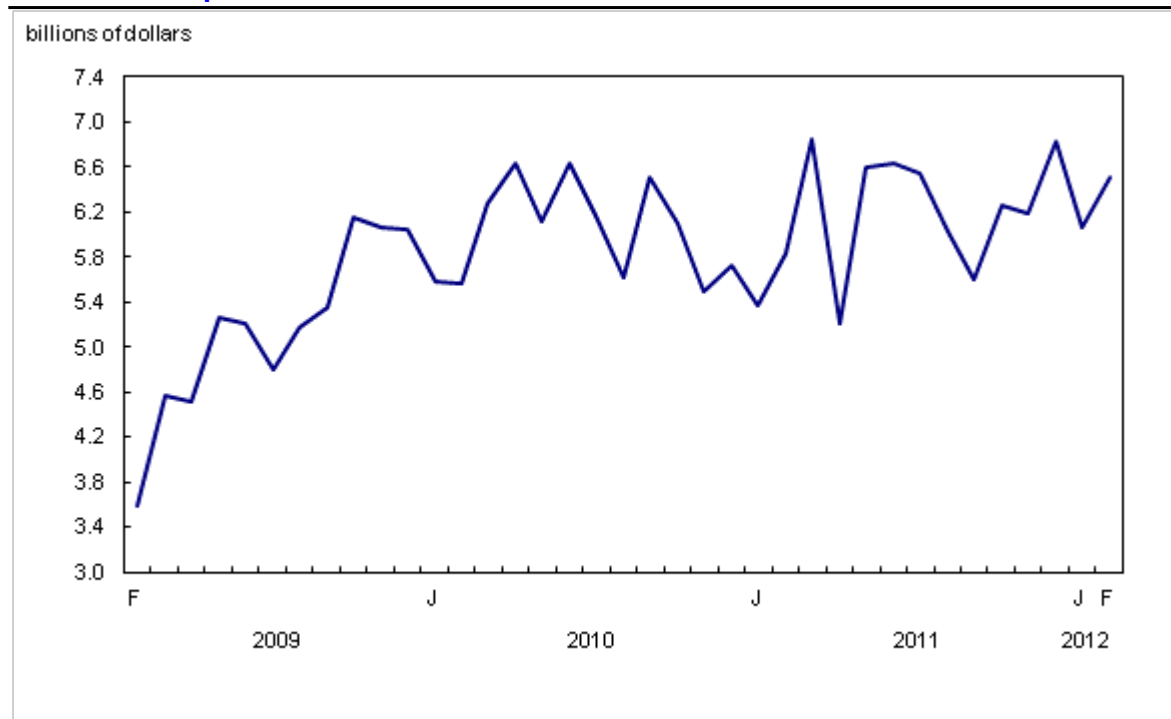


Building permits, February 2012

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Thursday, April 5, 2012

The total value of permits rose 7.5% to \$6.5 billion in February, following an 11.4% decline in January. The advance in February was the result of an increase in the non-residential sector, which offset the decrease in the residential sector.

Chart 1
Total value of permits



In the non-residential sector, the value of permits increased 36.2% to \$2.5 billion, after decreasing 20.6% in January. The increase resulted from higher non-residential construction intentions in seven provinces. British Columbia, Quebec and Alberta were largely responsible for the advance.

In contrast, the value of residential permits declined to \$3.9 billion, 5.3% less than in January. The decrease in February was mainly attributable to lower construction intentions for single-family and multi-family dwellings in Ontario. Declines were also posted in five other provinces. The largest gains were observed in Alberta, Quebec and British Columbia.



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.

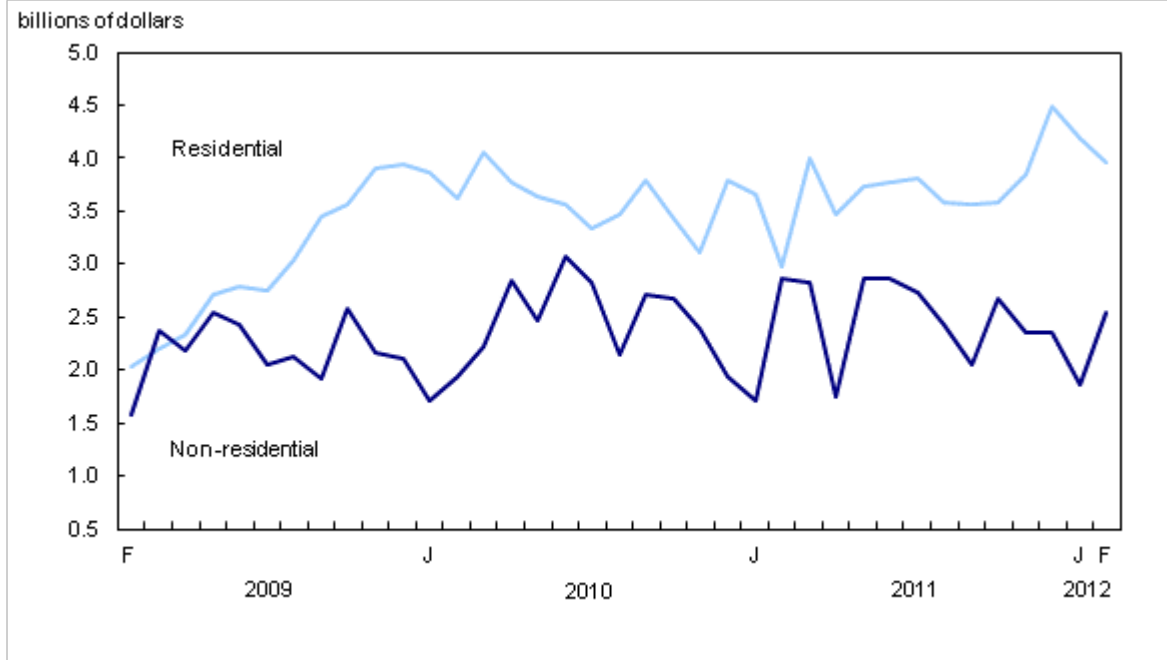
Non-residential sector: Increases in all three components

After three consecutive monthly declines, the value of permits in the industrial component rose 151.1% to \$714 million in February, the highest level since February 2011. Industrial construction intentions were up in every province except Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan. The largest increases were in building permits for manufacturing plants in British Columbia, Quebec, Ontario and Alberta.

In the institutional component, the value of permits grew 64.8% to \$517 million. The advance followed three consecutive monthly declines. February's increase was the result of higher construction intentions for a variety of structures in several provinces, including government buildings, educational institutions and medical buildings. The value of institutional permits was up in seven provinces, led by Quebec, Alberta and Ontario.

The value of commercial building permits rose 3.4% to \$1.3 billion, following a 19.7% decline in January. The increase was largely attributable to construction intentions for office buildings and retail stores in Alberta. Higher construction intentions for various types of commercial buildings in other provinces also contributed to the advance.

Chart 2
Residential and non-residential sectors



Residential sector: Lower intentions for single-family and multi-family dwellings

Contractors took out \$2.3 billion worth of building permits for single-family dwellings in February, down 6.7% from January and the second consecutive monthly decline. Ontario posted the largest decline in single-family permits; however, five provinces recorded gains.

Construction intentions for multi-family dwellings fell 3.3% to \$1.6 billion in February. The decrease was attributable to lower construction intentions in five provinces, mainly Ontario. Quebec posted the largest gain, followed by Alberta.

Canadian municipalities approved the construction of 17,259 new dwellings in February, down 2.0% from January. The decrease was attributable to single-family dwellings, which declined 6.9% to 6,922 units. Multi-family dwellings, however, rose 1.6% to 10,337 units.

British Columbia, Quebec and Alberta post the largest gains

The total value of building permits was up in six provinces in February.

British Columbia had the largest increase, after two consecutive monthly declines. The advance was attributable to higher construction intentions in all components except the commercial component.

Quebec and Alberta posted the second- and third-largest gains respectively in February as a result of increases in the residential and non-residential sectors.

Ontario reported the largest decline, a result of lower construction intentions in the residential sector and, to a lesser extent, for commercial buildings.

Permit values up in most census metropolitan areas

The total value of permits was up in 23 of the 34 census metropolitan areas.

The largest increases were in Calgary, Edmonton and Montréal. In Calgary, the advance was primarily the result of building permits for residential construction and commercial and institutional buildings. In Edmonton, the gain stemmed from higher construction intentions in the residential sector and for industrial and institutional buildings. In Montréal, the increase was mainly attributable to higher construction intentions for non-residential buildings and multi-family dwellings.

Toronto, Ottawa and Hamilton reported the largest declines. In Toronto, the decrease resulted in particular from lower intentions in the residential sector, which offset the gain in the non-residential sector. In Ottawa, the decline was attributable to lower intentions in every component except the institutional component. In Hamilton, the downturn was primarily because of lower construction intentions in the residential sector and for institutional buildings.

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

	February 2011	December 2011	January 2012 ^r	February 2012 ^p	January to February 2012	February 2011 to February 2012
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total	5,832.9	6,839.2	6,061.4	6,513.4	7.5	11.7
Residential	2,973.2	4,486.0	4,193.6	3,969.6	-5.3	33.5
Single ¹	2,041.1	2,541.9	2,521.9	2,353.6	-6.7	15.3
Multiple	932.0	1,944.1	1,671.7	1,616.0	-3.3	73.4
Non-residential	2,859.7	2,353.2	1,867.8	2,543.8	36.2	-11.0
Industrial	917.0	343.1	284.6	714.5	151.1	-22.1
Commercial	1,218.8	1,581.1	1,269.6	1,312.3	3.4	7.7
Institutional	724.0	429.0	313.7	517.1	64.8	-28.6
	number of units				% change	
Total dwellings	13,505	19,115	17,613	17,259	-2.0	27.8
Single ¹	6,609	7,507	7,437	6,922	-6.9	4.7
Multiple	6,896	11,608	10,176	10,337	1.6	49.9

^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

	February 2011	December 2011	January 2012 ^r	February 2012 ^p	January to February 2012	February 2011 to February 2012
	millions of dollars				% change	
Canada	5,832.9	6,839.2	6,061.4	6,513.4	7.5	11.7
Residential	2,973.2	4,486.0	4,193.6	3,969.6	-5.3	33.5
Non-residential	2,859.7	2,353.2	1,867.8	2,543.8	36.2	-11.0
Newfoundland and Labrador	69.1	73.6	100.5	101.3	0.8	46.5
Residential	51.5	63.4	84.3	88.5	5.1	71.8
Non-residential	17.6	10.2	16.2	12.8	-21.1	-27.3
Prince Edward Island	16.7	20.6	29.7	8.6	-71.1	-48.7
Residential	8.6	13.6	18.6	8.1	-56.3	-5.7
Non-residential	8.1	7.0	11.0	0.4	-96.1	-94.7
Nova Scotia	124.2	142.4	102.0	124.9	22.5	0.5
Residential	88.3	82.7	85.8	60.7	-29.3	-31.3
Non-residential	35.9	59.8	16.1	64.2	298.6	78.9
New Brunswick	52.7	75.8	60.6	69.5	14.7	32.0
Residential	37.4	48.4	46.9	46.8	-0.2	25.3
Non-residential	15.3	27.3	13.7	22.7	65.9	48.3
Quebec	1,183.5	1,266.3	1,157.4	1,374.6	18.8	16.2
Residential	822.5	860.7	825.2	892.3	8.1	8.5
Non-residential	361.0	405.6	332.2	482.3	45.2	33.6
Ontario	1,974.8	2,817.5	2,544.6	2,271.4	-10.7	15.0
Residential	892.3	2,018.2	1,813.3	1,472.0	-18.8	65.0
Non-residential	1,082.5	799.3	731.3	799.5	9.3	-26.1
Manitoba	127.9	146.2	202.5	173.2	-14.4	35.4
Residential	88.8	104.9	136.7	96.6	-29.4	8.8
Non-residential	39.2	41.4	65.8	76.7	16.6	95.7
Saskatchewan	173.7	174.1	206.8	201.4	-2.6	15.9
Residential	100.4	125.2	132.5	129.8	-2.1	29.2
Non-residential	73.3	48.9	74.2	71.6	-3.5	-2.3
Alberta	1,478.0	1,317.5	936.7	1,142.5	22.0	-22.7
Residential	435.2	652.5	581.6	654.0	12.4	50.3
Non-residential	1,042.8	665.0	355.0	488.4	37.6	-53.2
British Columbia	626.0	798.1	714.9	1,040.3	45.5	66.2
Residential	443.4	512.3	464.1	518.1	11.6	16.8
Non-residential	182.6	285.9	250.8	522.2	108.2	186.0
Yukon	3.8	6.1	4.3	3.0	-29.8	-20.4
Residential	3.4	3.4	4.1	2.3	-42.9	-30.6
Non-residential	0.4	2.7	0.2	0.7	214.7	58.1
Northwest Territories	1.8	0.8	1.7	2.7	52.2	44.1
Residential	0.8	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.3	-54.2
Non-residential	1.0	0.1	1.4	2.3	65.7	118.3
Nunavut	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	-100.0
Residential	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	-100.0
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 adjusted¹

	February 2011	December 2011	January 2012 ^r	February 2012 ^p	January to February 2012	February 2011 to February 2012
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total, census metropolitan areas	4,470.6	5,320.4	4,581.4	4,751.1	3.7	6.3
St. John's	33.8	41.8	73.9	74.2	0.4	119.3
Halifax	66.8	95.0	51.6	79.8	54.6	19.5
Moncton	6.5	28.9	20.7	14.3	-31.0	119.3
Saint John	9.9	9.5	15.6	12.9	-17.3	30.0
Saguenay	21.7	17.7	17.3	12.5	-27.6	-42.2
Québec	117.4	142.8	145.0	146.0	0.7	24.3
Sherbrooke	50.4	21.2	35.3	65.1	84.3	29.3
Trois-Rivières	16.2	32.3	17.9	23.6	31.9	45.7
Montréal	543.3	577.9	539.1	607.1	12.6	11.8
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	192.3	131.7	269.2	226.4	-15.9	17.7
Gatineau part	47.3	32.6	38.0	55.3	45.6	16.9
Ottawa part	145.0	99.1	231.2	171.1	-26.0	18.0
Kingston	9.1	35.7	10.4	13.7	32.0	50.0
Peterborough	7.0	18.4	7.7	7.9	3.1	12.7
Oshawa	40.9	116.1	47.5	50.4	6.1	23.4
Toronto	924.2	1,580.6	1,495.7	1,314.9	-12.1	42.3
Hamilton	113.2	77.3	174.5	130.7	-25.1	15.5
St. Catharines–Niagara	50.0	19.1	35.9	28.7	-20.0	-42.5
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	190.6	187.7	65.6	92.4	40.8	-51.5
Brantford	15.0	7.2	15.0	6.1	-59.1	-59.3
Guelph	18.3	11.2	42.0	18.8	-55.2	2.6
London	117.2	117.3	54.1	61.6	13.8	-47.5
Windsor	13.9	14.7	23.4	50.6	116.4	265.3
Barrie	13.3	98.1	6.5	24.9	284.2	87.8
Greater Sudbury	8.6	53.8	4.4	5.2	17.9	-39.4
Thunder Bay	7.1	4.0	3.8	5.7	49.5	-19.4
Winnipeg	93.8	95.7	113.7	80.5	-29.2	-14.2
Regina	28.3	55.8	61.9	52.9	-14.5	86.9
Saskatoon	67.5	73.9	96.9	98.2	1.4	45.5
Calgary	943.5	663.9	304.2	445.4	46.4	-52.8
Edmonton	284.6	353.3	318.6	402.2	26.3	41.3
Kelowna	14.7	28.2	8.1	19.6	142.4	33.3
Abbotsford–Mission	20.7	5.6	17.8	18.6	4.2	-10.4
Vancouver	380.4	571.4	448.1	491.3	9.6	29.2
Victoria	50.3	32.6	40.2	68.6	70.8	36.4

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

The March building permits data will be released on May 7.

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

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Mahamat Hamit-Haggar (613-951-0862), Investment, Science and Technology Division.