

The Daily

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Building permits, March 2013

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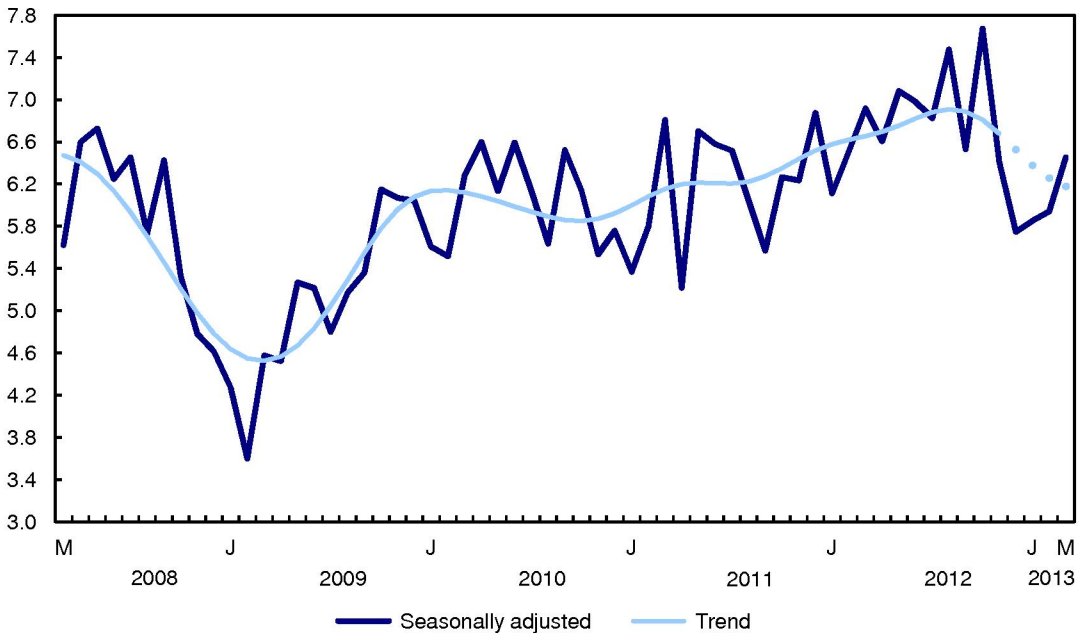
Building permits, March 2013

Contractors took out building permits worth \$6.5 billion in March, up 8.6% from February and the third consecutive monthly advance. The March increase came mostly from the non-residential sector in Ontario and Alberta.

The advance in March was not sufficiently large to reverse the declining trend that began in the fall of 2012.

Chart 1
Total value of permits

billions of dollars



Note(s): The higher variability associated with the trend-cycle estimates is indicated with a dotted line on the chart for the current reference month and the three previous months. See Note to readers.

The value of non-residential building permits rose 19.0% to \$2.8 billion, a second consecutive monthly gain. Ontario and Alberta were behind most of the growth at the national level. Declines were recorded in four provinces, with Quebec and Manitoba posting the largest decreases.

In the residential sector, the value of permits increased 1.7% to \$3.6 billion. The advance came in the wake of an 8.1% decline in February. Despite this growth, residential construction intentions remained on a downward trend that started in mid-2012. The increase in March was attributable to building permits for multi-family dwellings. The value of residential buildings permits was up in seven provinces, led by Alberta. Quebec posted the largest decline.

Non-residential sector: Significant rise in the institutional component

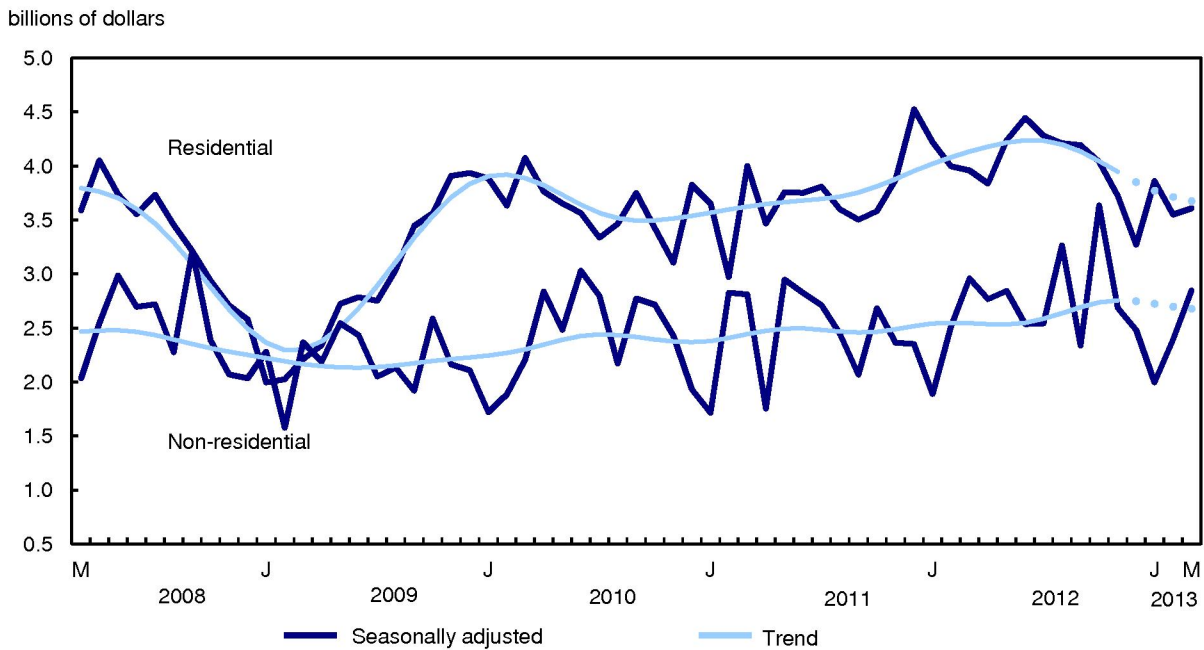
In the institutional component, the value of permits more than doubled to \$980 million in March, following a 28.1% increase in February. This was the highest level since October 2012, when the value of permits exceeded the \$1-billion mark.

Institutional construction intentions were up in six provinces, with the largest increases in construction permits for government buildings in Alberta as well as medical and educational buildings in Ontario.

In the industrial component, the value of permits rose 17.2% to \$472 million, a second consecutive monthly increase. This advance was the result of higher construction intentions for manufacturing plants in Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec, and for primary industry buildings in Saskatchewan, Ontario and Quebec. Gains were posted in seven provinces.

Following a 14.4% advance in February, Canadian municipalities issued \$1.4 billion worth of commercial building permits in March, down 9.6%. The decline came from a variety of buildings, including recreational facilities, hotels and retail stores. Decreases occurred in six provinces, with Alberta posting the largest decline. In contrast, Ontario posted the largest gain, as a result of higher construction intentions for hotels, office buildings and warehouses.

**Chart 2
Residential and non-residential sectors**



Note(s): The higher variability associated with the trend-cycle estimates is indicated with a dotted line on the chart for the current reference month and the three previous months. See Note to readers.

Residential sector: Higher construction intentions for multi-family dwellings

The value of permits for multi-family dwellings rose 13.4% to \$1.4 billion, following a 20.5% decrease the previous month. This increase more than offset the decline in the value of permits for single-family units. The growth was largely the result of major condominium apartment projects in Alberta. Gains were observed in all provinces except Quebec and Prince Edward Island.

Construction intentions for single-family dwellings fell 4.7% to \$2.2 billion. The decline came in the wake of two consecutive monthly increases and was the fourth decrease in six months. Declines were registered in six provinces, with Ontario, Alberta and Manitoba accounting for most of the decrease.

Canadian municipalities approved the construction of 14,558 new dwellings, 4.3% more than in February. The advance was attributable to multi-family dwellings, which increased 11.8% to 8,321 units. In contrast, single-family dwellings declined 4.3% to 6,237 units.

Provinces: Large gains in Ontario and Alberta

In March, the value of permits was up in six provinces, led by Ontario and Alberta.

Ontario posted the largest gain, as a result of higher construction intentions for institutional and commercial buildings and, to a lesser extent, industrial buildings. In Alberta, institutional buildings and multi-family dwellings were behind the increase.

Saskatchewan followed a distant third, because of higher construction intentions for multi-family dwellings as well as institutional and industrial buildings.

Quebec posted the largest decline, as a result of lower construction intentions for multi-family dwellings, commercial structures and institutional buildings. In Manitoba, all components except multi-family dwellings contributed to the decline.

Significant increases in construction intentions in Toronto and Edmonton

In March, the total value of permits was up in 16 of the 34 census metropolitan areas.

The largest increases were in Toronto and Edmonton, with Saskatoon a distant third. In Toronto, the advance was largely attributable to commercial and institutional buildings. In Edmonton, the increase was primarily the result of higher construction intentions for institutional buildings. In Saskatoon, the value of permits was up for the third consecutive month in March, mostly because of institutional and industrial buildings.

In contrast, Montréal and Vancouver had the largest declines. In Montréal, construction intentions were down 17.8%, falling below the \$500 million mark for the first time since November 2011. All components except the commercial component contributed to the decline. In Vancouver, commercial and institutional buildings and single-family dwellings were responsible for the decline.

Note to readers

Unless otherwise stated, this release presents seasonally adjusted data, which facilitates comparisons by removing the effects of seasonal variations. For more information on seasonal adjustment, see *Seasonal adjustment and identifying economic trends*.

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 for the entire population.

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

Data for the current reference month are subject to revision based on late responses. Data have been revised for the previous month.

The trend-cycle estimates have been added to the charts as a complement to the seasonally adjusted series. Both the seasonally adjusted and the trend-cycle estimates are subject to revision as additional observations become available. These revisions could be large and even lead to a reversal of movement, especially at the end of the series. The higher variability associated with the trend-cycle estimates is indicated with a dotted line on the chart.

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

	March 2012	January 2013	February 2013 ^r	March 2013 ^P	February to March 2013	March 2012 to March 2013
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total	6,916.1	5,852.9	5,939.9	6,452.9	8.6	-6.7
Residential	3,958.0	3,859.1	3,548.0	3,607.0	1.7	-8.9
Single ¹	2,327.6	2,287.8	2,299.4	2,190.9	-4.7	-5.9
Multiple	1,630.4	1,571.3	1,248.6	1,416.0	13.4	-13.2
Non-residential	2,958.1	1,993.8	2,391.9	2,845.9	19.0	-3.8
Industrial	420.0	297.2	402.9	472.2	17.2	12.4
Commercial	1,559.1	1,347.0	1,541.2	1,393.5	-9.6	-10.6
Institutional	978.9	349.6	447.9	980.2	118.8	0.1
	number of units				% change	
Total dwellings	17,929	15,997	13,956	14,558	4.3	-18.8
Single ¹	7,159	6,455	6,516	6,237	-4.3	-12.9
Multiple	10,770	9,542	7,440	8,321	11.8	-22.7

^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 2012	January 2013	February 2013 ^r	March 2013 ^P	February to March 2013	March 2012 to March 2013
	millions of dollars				% change	
Canada	6,916.1	5,852.9	5,939.9	6,452.9	8.6	-6.7
Residential	3,958.0	3,859.1	3,548.0	3,607.0	1.7	-8.9
Non-residential	2,958.1	1,993.8	2,391.9	2,845.9	19.0	-3.8
Newfoundland and Labrador	162.8	80.8	66.8	57.3	-14.2	-64.8
Residential	67.5	61.5	34.3	50.7	47.5	-24.9
Non-residential	95.4	19.3	32.4	6.6	-79.5	-93.0
Prince Edward Island	21.7	13.1	8.7	29.5	239.2	36.2
Residential	11.9	9.9	4.6	9.0	95.5	-24.2
Non-residential	9.8	3.2	4.1	20.5	400.9	109.6
Nova Scotia	143.0	108.9	82.9	122.5	47.7	-14.3
Residential	76.4	89.6	66.6	89.0	33.6	16.5
Non-residential	66.6	19.3	16.4	33.5	104.8	-49.7
New Brunswick	95.4	158.2	46.5	44.6	-4.0	-53.2
Residential	42.9	113.7	25.6	31.1	21.6	-27.5
Non-residential	52.6	44.6	20.9	13.6	-35.2	-74.2
Quebec	1,261.0	1,206.8	1,240.8	1,041.7	-16.0	-17.4
Residential	878.0	741.8	740.3	628.8	-15.1	-28.4
Non-residential	383.0	465.0	500.5	412.9	-17.5	7.8
Ontario	2,805.0	1,943.3	1,959.5	2,349.7	19.9	-16.2
Residential	1,411.2	1,269.0	1,239.4	1,236.3	-0.2	-12.4
Non-residential	1,393.8	674.3	720.1	1,113.4	54.6	-20.1
Manitoba	232.0	162.4	201.2	145.7	-27.6	-37.2
Residential	109.7	113.3	125.4	105.9	-15.5	-3.4
Non-residential	122.3	49.2	75.8	39.7	-47.6	-67.5
Saskatchewan	220.4	224.6	213.4	270.2	26.6	22.6
Residential	122.5	152.8	117.5	140.2	19.3	14.5
Non-residential	98.0	71.8	95.9	130.0	35.6	32.7
Alberta	1,214.2	1,175.9	1,372.8	1,678.5	22.3	38.2
Residential	707.2	718.9	709.0	821.8	15.9	16.2
Non-residential	507.1	457.0	663.8	856.7	29.1	69.0
British Columbia	750.5	768.0	689.7	701.3	1.7	-6.6
Residential	522.3	580.4	479.3	488.3	1.9	-6.5
Non-residential	228.2	187.6	210.4	212.9	1.2	-6.7
Yukon	5.0	5.7	1.3	6.7	430.3	33.3
Residential	4.1	5.3	0.7	3.3	373.8	-18.4
Non-residential	1.0	0.4	0.6	3.4	500.2	250.1
Northwest Territories	2.0	3.2	51.2	2.9	-94.2	50.3
Residential	1.5	1.2	0.2	1.3	536.7	-14.0
Non-residential	0.4	2.0	51.0	1.6	-96.8	281.0
Nunavut	3.1	1.8	5.1	2.3	-55.7	-27.4
Residential	3.1	1.8	5.1	1.3	-75.4	-59.7
Non-residential	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0

^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

	March 2012	January 2013	February 2013 ^r	March 2013 ^P	February to March 2013	March 2012 to March 2013
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total, census metropolitan areas	5,388.1	4,317.9	4,383.8	5,109.0	16.5	-5.2
St. John's	135.9	53.5	35.4	32.4	-8.4	-76.1
Halifax	87.6	69.2	44.9	84.0	87.2	-4.1
Moncton	23.9	50.7	8.0	15.4	92.1	-35.6
Saint John	17.4	19.1	9.3	8.3	-11.3	-52.6
Saguenay	47.4	11.6	11.9	24.7	108.3	-47.9
Québec	177.5	111.8	112.9	116.0	2.7	-34.7
Sherbrooke	49.4	48.3	76.1	42.7	-43.9	-13.6
Trois-Rivières	30.1	30.2	19.3	30.8	59.5	2.3
Montréal	559.2	617.6	586.6	482.2	-17.8	-13.8
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	198.6	174.5	169.4	205.1	21.1	3.3
Gatineau part	38.8	34.4	40.6	34.6	-14.8	-10.8
Ottawa part	159.9	140.2	128.8	170.6	32.4	6.7
Kingston	17.0	8.2	48.3	10.7	-77.8	-37.1
Peterborough	16.3	7.2	9.7	4.2	-56.8	-74.3
Oshawa	39.4	61.1	64.3	33.2	-48.4	-15.8
Toronto	1,650.2	1,041.3	940.2	1,360.3	44.7	-17.6
Hamilton	186.6	132.9	107.6	119.2	10.8	-36.1
St. Catharines–Niagara	38.2	38.5	60.2	47.9	-20.3	25.3
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	133.6	40.0	64.9	84.0	29.4	-37.1
Brantford	11.9	5.7	10.6	7.3	-31.5	-38.8
Guelph	32.0	20.6	16.8	14.6	-13.2	-54.3
London	77.1	61.9	58.8	55.1	-6.3	-28.6
Windsor	66.4	18.2	26.4	21.8	-17.5	-67.2
Barrie	13.7	14.8	48.7	20.4	-58.1	49.3
Greater Sudbury	8.5	14.1	12.7	7.0	-44.8	-17.4
Thunder Bay	8.5	8.4	12.6	7.3	-42.0	-14.0
Winnipeg	186.2	116.8	142.2	108.1	-23.9	-41.9
Regina	57.3	53.8	57.7	78.8	36.6	37.4
Saskatoon	87.3	84.6	88.4	149.3	68.8	71.1
Calgary	456.7	394.6	517.1	553.9	7.1	21.3
Edmonton	377.4	382.7	479.6	849.9	77.2	125.2
Kelowna	42.0	19.1	25.3	36.1	42.7	-14.1
Abbotsford–Mission	13.6	16.1	6.4	10.7	68.8	-21.1
Vancouver	488.2	531.3	487.9	430.0	-11.9	-11.9
Victoria	53.0	59.5	23.8	57.5	141.5	8.6

^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 in CANSIM: tables 026-0001 to 026-0008 and 026-0010.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2802.

The March 2013 issue of *Building Permits* (64-001-X) will soon be available.

Building permits data for April will be released on June 5.

For more information, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 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.

Mineral wool including fibrous glass insulation, March 2013

Data on mineral wool, including fibrous glass insulation, are now available for March.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2110.

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

The Functional Foods and Natural Health Products Survey, 2011

Data from the 2011 Survey of Functional Food and Natural Health Products are now available.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5038.

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

For more information about functional food and natural health products related to this survey, contact Dr. Sara Sarkar (613-773-0234; sara.sarkar@agr.gc.ca), Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

New products and studies

New products

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