

Building permits, August 2013

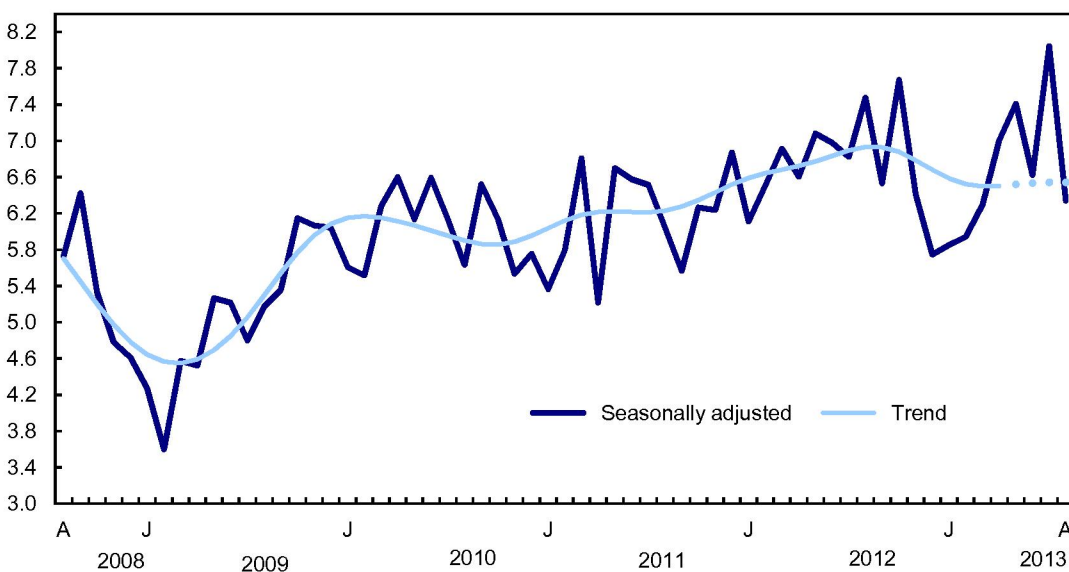
Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Monday, October 7, 2013

Canadian municipalities issued building permits worth \$6.3 billion in August, down 21.2% from July. This decline followed a 21.4% increase the previous month and was the result of lower construction intentions in both non-residential and residential sectors. With this decline, the trend in the value of building permits has become relatively flat since the beginning of 2013.

With the exception of British Columbia and Newfoundland and Labrador, every province registered declines in August with Ontario, Alberta and Quebec posting the largest decreases.

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.

In the non-residential sector, the total value of building permits fell 37.9% to \$2.4 billion in August, its lowest level since February 2013. This drop offset a 47.3% increase in July. Every province, except Newfoundland and Labrador, posted declines.

The total value of permits in the residential sector decreased 5.4% to \$3.9 billion in August, following a 4.2% increase in July. Lower construction intentions were posted in six provinces with Ontario, Quebec and Alberta registering the largest decreases. British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island recorded increases.

Non-residential sector: All three components down

Canadian municipalities issued \$1.4 billion worth of commercial building permits in August, down 45.8% from July, when commercial construction intentions were \$2.6 billion. The decline originated from lower construction intentions in a variety of commercial buildings, including office buildings, retail and wholesale outlets, retail complexes and recreational facilities. Decreases were posted in eight provinces, led by Ontario, followed by Alberta and Quebec. Newfoundland and Labrador and Saskatchewan were the two provinces to post gains.



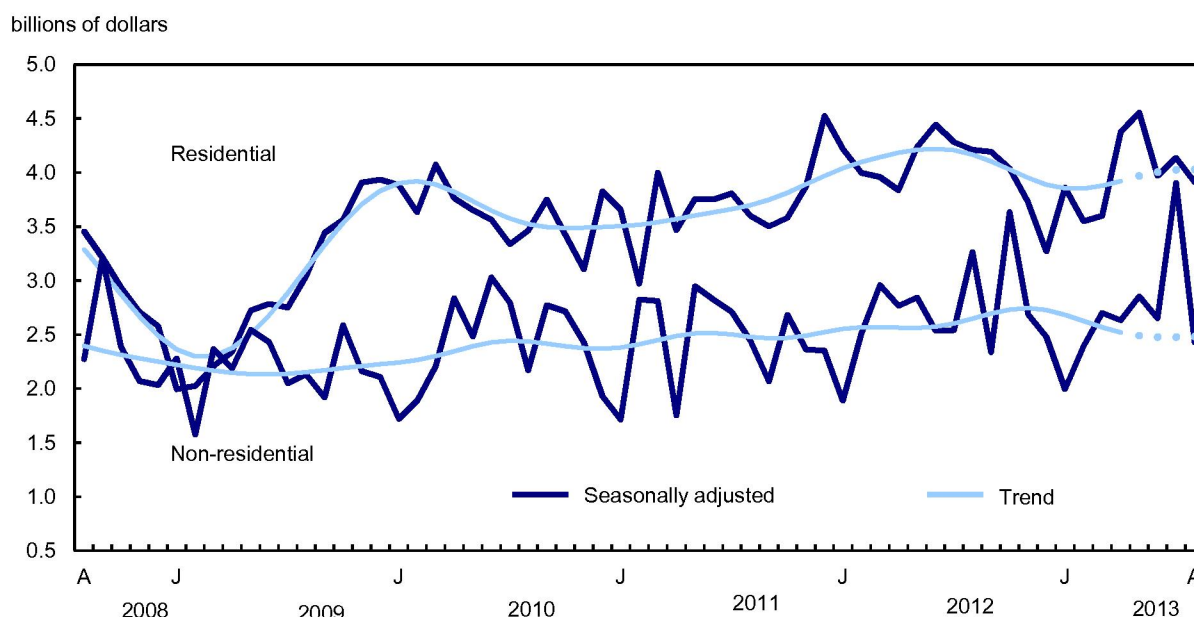
Statistics Canada
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In the institutional component, the value of permits fell 36.7% to \$507 million in August, the fourth decrease in five months. The value of institutional building permits was down in seven provinces. Ontario accounted for much of the decrease as a result of lower construction intentions for medical facilities and educational institutions. Quebec, British Columbia and Newfoundland and Labrador posted advances, mainly as a result of higher construction intentions for medical facilities.

In the industrial component, the value of permits declined 1.2% to \$526 million in August, following a 17.7% increase in July. Gains in five provinces failed to offset declines in the remaining provinces. Lower construction intentions for manufacturing plants were behind the national decline.

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

Building permits for multi-family dwellings decreased 8.3% to \$1.7 billion in August, the third monthly decline this year. Declines were reported in half of the provinces, led by Ontario and followed by Quebec. British Columbia registered the largest increase, with Saskatchewan a distant second.

Construction intentions for single-family dwellings fell 3.0% to \$2.2 billion in August. The decline in August failed to offset the increase in July. This was the second decrease in three months, bringing the year-to-date value down 7.5%. Lower construction intentions were posted in six provinces, with Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba accounting for most of the decline at the national level.

Nationally, municipalities approved the construction of 17,471 new dwellings in August, down 0.7% from July. The decline was attributable to lower construction intentions for single-family dwellings (down 3.4% to 6,087 dwellings), which offset an increase in multi-family dwellings (up 0.8% to 11,384 units).

Provinces: Large declines in Ontario, Alberta and Quebec

The total value of permits was down in eight provinces in August, led by Ontario, Alberta and Quebec.

The decrease in Ontario was mainly a result of lower construction intentions for commercial and institutional buildings, as well as multi-family dwellings. In Alberta, the decline was mostly attributable to commercial buildings, while in Quebec, it came mainly from commercial buildings and multi-family dwellings.

The largest increase occurred in British Columbia, where a rise in multi-family dwellings offset declines in the industrial and commercial components. In Newfoundland and Labrador, higher construction intentions for institutional buildings, single-family dwellings and commercial structures accounted for the advance.

Significant decreases in construction intentions in Toronto, Calgary and Montréal

In August, the total value of permits was down in 22 of the 34 census metropolitan areas.

The largest declines were in Toronto, followed by Calgary and Montréal. In Toronto, the decrease was largely attributable to commercial buildings, institutional structures and multi-family dwellings. Lower intentions for commercial and institutional buildings explained the decline in Calgary. The drop in Montréal originated from lower construction intentions for commercial and residential buildings.

Vancouver saw the largest increase in August, followed by Kelowna and Regina. In Vancouver, multi-family dwellings and commercial buildings were responsible for the advance, while in Kelowna and Regina, institutional and residential buildings were behind the gains.

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

	August 2012	June 2013	July 2013 ^r	August 2013 ^p	July to August 2013	August 2012 to August 2013
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total	7,474.7	6,623.1	8,043.6	6,339.7	-21.2	-15.2
Residential	4,210.2	3,971.0	4,137.4	3,912.2	-5.4	-7.1
Single ¹	2,404.1	2,153.7	2,236.1	2,168.1	-3.0	-9.8
Multiple	1,806.1	1,817.4	1,901.3	1,744.1	-8.3	-3.4
Non-residential	3,264.5	2,652.1	3,906.2	2,427.5	-37.9	-25.6
Industrial	664.6	452.2	532.1	525.7	-1.2	-20.9
Commercial	1,542.5	1,353.8	2,574.0	1,395.2	-45.8	-9.5
Institutional	1,057.4	846.1	800.0	506.7	-36.7	-52.1
	number of units				% change	
Total dwellings	18,969	17,623	17,590	17,471	-0.7	-7.9
Single ¹	7,127	6,088	6,300	6,087	-3.4	-14.6
Multiple	11,842	11,535	11,290	11,384	0.8	-3.9

^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 up to totals as a result of rounding.

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

	August 2012	June 2013	July 2013 ^r	August 2013 ^p	July to August 2013	August 2012 to August 2013
	millions of dollars				% change	
Canada	7,474.7	6,623.1	8,043.6	6,339.7	-21.2	-15.2
Residential	4,210.2	3,971.0	4,137.4	3,912.2	-5.4	-7.1
Non-residential	3,264.5	2,652.1	3,906.2	2,427.5	-37.9	-25.6
Newfoundland and Labrador	139.6	78.5	75.1	77.3	3.0	-44.7
Residential	77.4	58.9	56.9	53.2	-6.4	-31.2
Non-residential	62.2	19.6	18.2	24.0	32.1	-61.4
Prince Edward Island	27.8	13.2	20.6	14.4	-30.4	-48.3
Residential	21.7	10.8	9.9	11.9	20.6	-44.9
Non-residential	6.1	2.5	10.7	2.4	-77.4	-60.2
Nova Scotia	115.3	107.5	120.7	94.5	-21.7	-18.1
Residential	82.2	63.4	51.8	64.3	24.3	-21.7
Non-residential	33.2	44.1	68.9	30.2	-56.2	-9.0
New Brunswick	102.7	105.7	78.5	53.0	-32.5	-48.4
Residential	55.5	32.9	41.7	39.4	-5.4	-28.9
Non-residential	47.2	72.8	36.8	13.5	-63.2	-71.3
Quebec	1,399.2	1,043.8	1,385.3	1,102.5	-20.4	-21.2
Residential	835.2	663.6	775.1	671.3	-13.4	-19.6
Non-residential	564.0	380.2	610.2	431.2	-29.3	-23.5
Ontario	2,910.9	2,471.3	3,246.9	2,223.1	-31.5	-23.6
Residential	1,443.6	1,521.8	1,550.4	1,409.0	-9.1	-2.4
Non-residential	1,467.3	949.5	1,696.5	814.1	-52.0	-44.5
Manitoba	184.3	217.4	308.0	296.1	-3.9	60.6
Residential	114.6	110.0	142.6	136.3	-4.5	18.9
Non-residential	69.7	107.4	165.4	159.8	-3.4	129.1
Saskatchewan	332.6	307.6	276.0	272.5	-1.3	-18.1
Residential	179.2	161.9	152.4	165.1	8.4	-7.9
Non-residential	153.4	145.7	123.6	107.4	-13.2	-30.0
Alberta	1,343.3	1,372.6	1,637.6	1,308.6	-20.1	-2.6
Residential	827.7	763.2	814.1	755.9	-7.1	-8.7
Non-residential	515.6	609.4	823.5	552.6	-32.9	7.2
British Columbia	894.0	889.0	862.4	887.0	2.9	-0.8
Residential	558.9	574.0	530.7	598.4	12.8	7.1
Non-residential	335.1	315.0	331.8	288.6	-13.0	-13.9
Yukon	9.3	4.4	4.7	6.7	42.2	-27.2
Residential	6.7	3.3	2.7	4.1	51.7	-38.7
Non-residential	2.6	1.1	2.0	2.6	29.5	2.8
Northwest Territories	8.2	7.6	11.4	4.1	-64.3	-50.3
Residential	1.3	7.2	3.7	3.1	-16.4	137.9
Non-residential	6.9	0.4	7.7	1.0	-87.6	-86.2
Nunavut	7.3	4.5	16.3	0.0	-100.0	-100.0
Residential	6.1	0.0	5.4	0.0	-100.0	-100.0
Non-residential	1.2	4.5	10.9	0.0	-100.0	-100.0

^r revised

^p preliminary

... not applicable

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

Table 3
Value of building permits, by census metropolitan area – Seasonally adjusted¹

	August 2012	June 2013	July 2013 ^r	August 2013 ^p	July to August 2013	August 2012 to August 2013
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total, census metropolitan areas	5,748.3	5,025.6	6,352.4	4,911.2	-22.7	-14.6
St. John's	58.3	46.5	48.8	45.3	-7.0	-22.2
Halifax	71.4	47.6	61.9	48.5	-21.6	-32.1
Moncton	49.3	53.3	22.2	16.4	-26.0	-66.8
Saint John	18.7	8.3	14.0	9.8	-29.9	-47.2
Saguenay	32.2	30.4	24.9	21.4	-14.2	-33.8
Québec	140.7	101.8	162.0	147.9	-8.7	5.1
Sherbrooke	27.6	25.6	23.2	24.0	3.2	-13.3
Trois-Rivières	40.8	20.5	26.8	22.6	-15.7	-44.6
Montréal	662.8	536.8	736.6	533.3	-27.6	-19.5
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	229.0	200.7	291.3	173.5	-40.4	-24.2
Gatineau part	63.7	20.8	56.5	47.7	-15.5	-25.1
Ottawa part	165.3	179.9	234.8	125.8	-46.4	-23.9
Kingston	21.7	31.2	22.0	39.7	80.6	83.2
Peterborough	43.9	23.7	12.9	13.2	1.9	-70.0
Oshawa	165.6	93.2	92.0	56.5	-38.5	-65.9
Toronto	1,440.2	1,120.1	1,945.4	1,246.2	-35.9	-13.5
Hamilton	300.4	155.5	80.5	91.1	13.2	-69.7
St. Catharines–Niagara	37.3	49.9	86.7	57.1	-34.1	53.1
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	96.7	95.9	80.0	60.2	-24.7	-37.8
Brantford	10.9	48.2	12.2	9.4	-23.0	-14.2
Guelph	26.5	26.1	39.0	33.5	-14.3	26.3
London	101.7	133.3	83.1	68.3	-17.8	-32.8
Windsor	49.7	28.4	28.2	38.4	36.0	-22.8
Barrie	27.2	34.3	22.5	40.3	78.9	48.4
Greater Sudbury	23.5	23.2	77.8	20.3	-73.9	-13.7
Thunder Bay	13.3	84.3	39.6	11.9	-69.9	-10.3
Winnipeg	113.7	152.1	221.5	238.8	7.8	110.1
Regina	110.7	71.1	58.1	86.9	49.8	-21.4
Saskatoon	112.1	127.8	123.7	141.2	14.2	26.0
Calgary	526.2	539.0	842.5	542.8	-35.6	3.2
Edmonton	511.7	402.3	450.2	364.1	-19.1	-28.8
Kelowna	35.0	23.5	38.8	69.8	79.9	99.5
Abbotsford–Mission	11.1	13.8	12.0	12.3	2.1	11.0
Vancouver	598.6	628.6	513.0	582.8	13.6	-2.6
Victoria	39.8	48.9	59.3	43.8	-26.2	10.0

^r revised

^p preliminary

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

Note(s): Data may not add up 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 August 2013 issue of *Building Permits* (64-001-X) will soon be available.

The September building permits data will be released on November 6.

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).

To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Jeremie Bennett (613-951-0793), Investment, Science and Technology Division.