

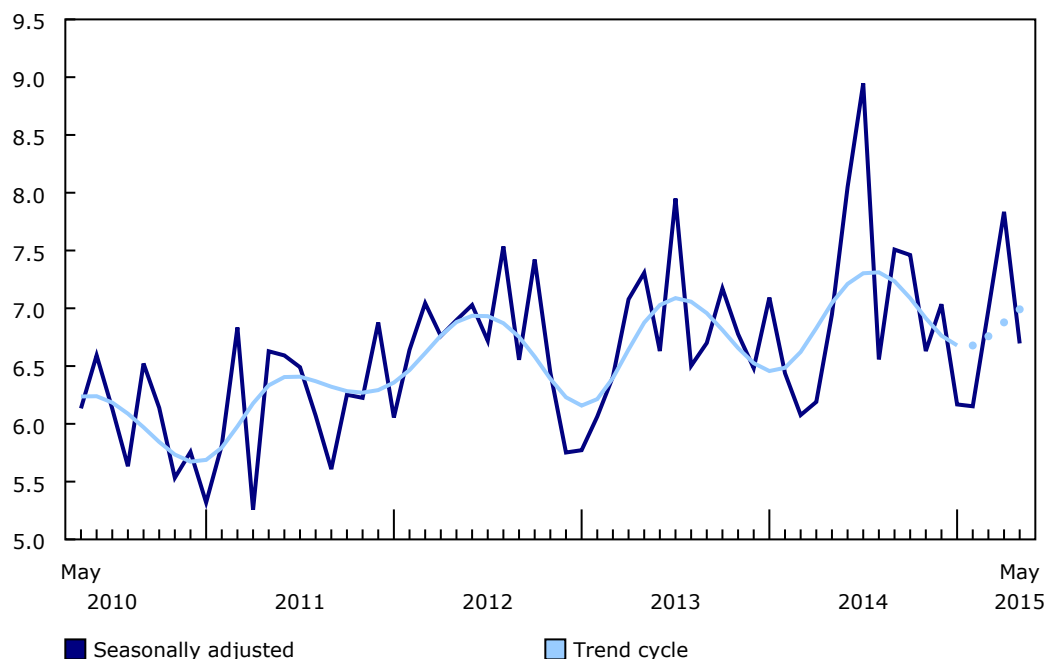
Building permits, May 2015

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Wednesday, July 8, 2015

The total value of building permits fell 14.5% to \$6.7 billion in May, following two months of double-digit gains. Declines were recorded in five provinces, led by Ontario, which had posted a notable increase the previous month.

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.
Source(s): CANSIM table [026-0010](#).

In the residential sector, the value of permits declined 13.5% to \$3.9 billion in May, ending a string of three consecutive monthly increases. Declines were registered in seven provinces, with Ontario and Alberta responsible for much of the decrease. British Columbia, in turn, reported the largest gain.

Canadian municipalities issued non-residential building permits worth \$2.8 billion in May, down 16.0% from April. This decline followed gains of 24.8% in March and 31.7% in April. Increases in seven provinces and one territory were not sufficiently large to offset decreases in the other provinces and territories. Ontario led the decline, followed by British Columbia and Newfoundland and Labrador.

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

The value of multi-family dwelling permits fell for a second consecutive month, down 22.9% to \$1.6 billion in May. The decrease stemmed from lower construction intentions in every province and territory, except British Columbia, New Brunswick and Nunavut.

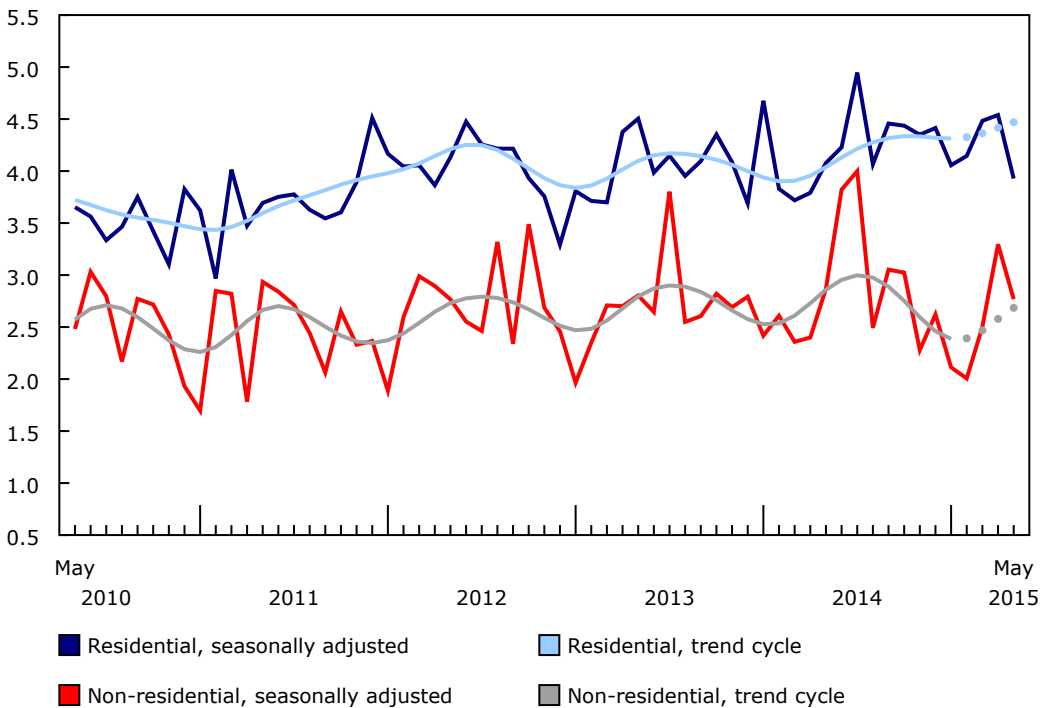


Contractors took out \$2.3 billion worth of building permits for single-family dwellings in May, down 5.5% from the previous month. This was the third decline in four months. Decreases were posted in five provinces, with Ontario recording the largest decline, followed by Alberta, a distant second. Quebec registered the largest gain.

Nationally, municipalities authorized the construction of 15,381 new dwellings in May, down 14.8% from April. The decrease came mainly from multi-family dwellings, down 20.6% to 9,719 units. The number of single-family dwellings declined 2.8% to 5,662 units.

Chart 2
Residential and non-residential sectors

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.

Source(s): CANSIM table [026-0010](#).

Non-residential sector: Large decline in the institutional component

The value of permits for institutional buildings fell 34.0% to \$867 million in May, after posting gains of 83.7% in March and 88.1% in April. The decrease at the national level resulted from lower construction intentions for medical facilities, which recorded a large increase in April. Declines were registered in four provinces, with Ontario accounting for most of the drop, followed by British Columbia. Gains were posted in the six remaining provinces, led by Alberta, and were mainly the result of higher construction intentions for educational facilities.

In the industrial component, construction intentions fell 15.6% to \$408 million in May, following three straight monthly advances. The decline originated from lower construction intentions for utilities buildings and transportation-related buildings. Declines were reported in six provinces, led by Ontario and Newfoundland and Labrador. Alberta and Quebec posted the largest gains.

Commercial building permit values totalled \$1.5 billion in May, edging down 0.4% from a month earlier. Lower intentions for retail complexes, hotels and restaurants, warehouses as well as other minor commercial projects more than offset increased intentions for recreational buildings, office buildings and laboratories. British Columbia registered the biggest decline, while Quebec recorded the largest increase.

Permit values down in five provinces

The total value of building permits declined in five provinces in May, with Ontario posting the largest decrease, followed by British Columbia, Alberta, Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia.

After reporting the largest increase the previous month, Ontario posted a decline, mostly as a result of lower construction intentions for institutional buildings, multi-family dwellings and single-family houses. In British Columbia, the decrease originated from commercial structures, institutional buildings and single-family dwellings.

In Alberta, the decline was mostly attributable to multi-family dwellings, single-family houses and commercial buildings. In Newfoundland and Labrador, lower construction intentions for industrial buildings explained much of the decline, while in Nova Scotia, lower intentions for multi-family dwellings were responsible for the decline.

In contrast, Quebec and New Brunswick registered the largest increases. In Quebec, the increase came from higher construction intentions for non-residential buildings and single-family dwellings. In New Brunswick, the gain was attributable to every component, except industrial buildings.

Lower construction intentions in almost half of the census metropolitan areas

In May, the total value of permits fell in 16 of the 34 census metropolitan areas, with Toronto posting the largest decline, followed by Calgary and Vancouver.

In Toronto, the decline originated from institutional buildings and multi-family dwellings. Both components were up notably the previous month. In Calgary, lower construction intentions for multi-family dwellings and, to a lesser extent, industrial buildings and institutional buildings were responsible for the decline. In Vancouver, commercial and institutional buildings accounted for much of the decrease.

In contrast, Hamilton and Edmonton posted the largest gains. In Hamilton, the advance was attributable to higher intentions for institutional buildings, while in Edmonton, increased construction intentions for multi-family dwellings, institutional structures and industrial buildings more than offset lower intentions for single-family dwellings and commercial buildings.

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 [Seasonally adjusted data – Frequently asked questions](#).

The Building Permits Survey covers over 2,400 municipalities representing 95% of the Canadian population. 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.

Building permits data are used as a leading indicator of activity in the construction industry.

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 for the previous month have been revised.

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.

Next release

The June building permits data will be released on August 7.

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

	May 2014	March 2015	April 2015 ^r	May 2015 ^p	April to May 2015	May 2014 to May 2015
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total	6,947.4	6,986.7	7,835.5	6,696.3	-14.5	-3.6
Residential	4,078.1	4,483.4	4,539.5	3,928.1	-13.5	-3.7
Single ¹	2,299.0	2,301.5	2,465.3	2,328.6	-5.5	1.3
Multiple	1,779.2	2,182.0	2,074.2	1,599.5	-22.9	-10.1
Non-residential	2,869.2	2,503.2	3,296.0	2,768.2	-16.0	-3.5
Industrial	454.8	433.0	483.8	408.3	-15.6	-10.2
Commercial	1,802.6	1,371.9	1,498.6	1,492.9	-0.4	-17.2
Institutional	611.8	698.3	1,313.6	866.9	-34.0	41.7
	number of units				% change	
Total dwellings	17,372	18,735	18,063	15,381	-14.8	-11.5
Single ¹	6,097	5,530	5,825	5,662	-2.8	-7.1
Multiple	11,275	13,205	12,238	9,719	-20.6	-13.8

^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.

Source(s): CANSIM tables [026-0006](#) and [026-0010](#).

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

	May 2014	March 2015	April 2015 ^r	May 2015 ^p	April to May 2015	May 2014 to May 2015
	millions of dollars				% change	
Canada	6,947.4	6,986.7	7,835.5	6,696.3	-14.5	-3.6
Residential	4,078.1	4,483.4	4,539.5	3,928.1	-13.5	-3.7
Non-residential	2,869.2	2,503.2	3,296.0	2,768.2	-16.0	-3.5
Newfoundland and Labrador	78.2	47.4	87.5	47.3	-45.9	-39.5
Residential	46.5	34.2	36.8	33.9	-8.0	-27.1
Non-residential	31.8	13.3	50.6	13.5	-73.4	-57.6
Prince Edward Island	17.1	11.1	11.0	15.0	36.1	-12.3
Residential	9.2	6.0	6.3	6.9	10.6	-24.8
Non-residential	7.8	5.1	4.7	8.0	70.1	2.4
Nova Scotia	96.3	88.9	134.0	95.6	-28.6	-0.7
Residential	51.7	56.7	103.0	61.5	-40.3	18.9
Non-residential	44.6	32.3	30.9	34.1	10.3	-23.5
New Brunswick	67.4	49.4	41.9	62.2	48.7	-7.7
Residential	34.5	24.6	23.3	30.8	32.0	-10.7
Non-residential	32.9	24.8	18.5	31.4	69.7	-4.4
Quebec	1,154.7	1,117.9	1,036.7	1,073.0	3.5	-7.1
Residential	673.3	636.4	693.4	620.1	-10.6	-7.9
Non-residential	481.4	481.5	343.3	452.9	31.9	-5.9
Ontario	2,549.0	2,451.5	3,692.6	2,712.8	-26.5	6.4
Residential	1,528.5	1,724.9	1,952.0	1,576.0	-19.3	3.1
Non-residential	1,020.6	726.6	1,740.6	1,136.8	-34.7	11.4
Manitoba	374.3	223.2	164.5	175.0	6.4	-53.2
Residential	157.7	121.6	108.8	94.2	-13.5	-40.3
Non-residential	216.6	101.6	55.7	80.9	45.3	-62.7
Saskatchewan	247.1	247.9	201.5	202.4	0.4	-18.1
Residential	145.6	120.5	115.5	93.2	-19.3	-36.0
Non-residential	101.5	127.3	86.1	109.2	26.8	7.6
Alberta	1,460.3	1,349.9	1,418.9	1,340.9	-5.5	-8.2
Residential	812.2	832.9	804.2	661.7	-17.7	-18.5
Non-residential	648.1	517.0	614.6	679.2	10.5	4.8
British Columbia	886.9	1,394.6	1,037.8	956.8	-7.8	7.9
Residential	610.4	921.9	690.9	742.0	7.4	21.6
Non-residential	276.5	472.7	347.0	214.9	-38.1	-22.3
Yukon	9.8	1.6	4.9	10.5	115.0	7.1
Residential	3.6	1.5	4.7	3.2	-32.2	-10.8
Non-residential	6.2	0.1	0.1	7.2	...	17.5
Northwest Territories	2.7	1.8	3.8	0.3	-92.6	-89.6
Residential	1.5	0.9	0.5	0.2	-57.3	-85.8
Non-residential	1.3	0.8	3.4	0.1	-97.7	-93.9
Nunavut	3.5	1.3	0.5	4.4	742.9	24.0
Residential	3.5	1.3	0.0	4.4	...	24.5
Non-residential	0.0	0.0	0.5	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.

Source(s): CANSIM table [026-0006](#).

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

	May 2014	March 2015	April 2015 ^r	May 2015 ^p	April to May 2015	May 2014 to May 2015
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total, census metropolitan areas	5,431.0	5,443.1	6,483.4	5,205.1	-19.7	-4.2
St. John's	48.7	30.6	71.5	28.6	-60.0	-41.3
Halifax	57.0	52.7	105.5	52.6	-50.1	-7.7
Moncton	29.1	20.7	10.9	15.3	40.7	-47.5
Saint John	8.1	9.6	6.5	6.3	-3.1	-22.0
Saguenay	24.4	29.8	23.8	32.0	34.3	30.9
Québec	102.0	145.6	99.7	117.8	18.1	15.4
Sherbrooke	26.9	40.9	33.7	35.8	6.4	32.9
Trois-Rivières	34.1	14.4	37.1	29.5	-20.5	-13.5
Montréal	618.7	503.5	492.0	475.0	-3.5	-23.2
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	197.9	165.0	204.3	214.7	5.1	8.5
Gatineau part	44.5	19.5	46.2	42.4	-8.2	-4.7
Ottawa part	153.4	145.5	158.2	172.3	8.9	12.3
Kingston	21.9	9.5	24.3	28.1	15.7	28.2
Peterborough	21.3	10.2	12.9	14.2	10.1	-33.4
Oshawa	81.1	100.1	91.0	73.9	-18.7	-8.8
Toronto	1,438.1	1,384.3	2,530.5	1,348.2	-46.7	-6.3
Hamilton	91.6	99.0	104.1	313.0	200.8	241.7
St. Catharines–Niagara	41.7	43.5	48.9	54.2	10.8	29.9
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	97.7	86.9	104.7	123.1	17.6	26.0
Brantford	15.2	12.3	12.9	14.8	14.9	-2.3
Guelph	18.6	28.2	55.3	22.7	-58.9	22.4
London	60.2	60.4	77.3	63.8	-17.5	6.0
Windsor	36.8	56.2	48.2	42.4	-12.1	15.2
Barrie	38.7	31.3	28.1	14.4	-48.8	-62.9
Greater Sudbury	33.3	7.9	8.2	25.0	205.6	-24.9
Thunder Bay	19.9	2.7	9.3	18.3	97.3	-8.2
Winnipeg	306.1	134.2	109.6	139.2	27.0	-54.5
Regina	42.9	77.9	53.9	58.5	8.4	36.4
Saskatoon	140.7	99.1	93.9	88.4	-5.9	-37.2
Calgary	612.0	617.1	644.4	418.5	-35.1	-31.6
Edmonton	473.8	431.0	498.6	575.7	15.5	21.5
Kelowna	29.8	62.5	29.1	57.5	97.9	93.1
Abbotsford–Mission	10.2	18.2	10.0	22.7	128.2	123.2
Vancouver	590.5	985.6	727.1	631.0	-13.2	6.9
Victoria	62.0	72.1	76.2	50.1	-34.3	-19.3

^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.

Source(s): CANSIM table [026-0006](#).

Available in CANSIM: tables [026-0001](#) to [026-0008](#) and [026-0010](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [2802](#).

The May 2015 issue of *Building Permits* ([64-001-X](#)) will soon be available.

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), Investment, Science and Technology Division.