

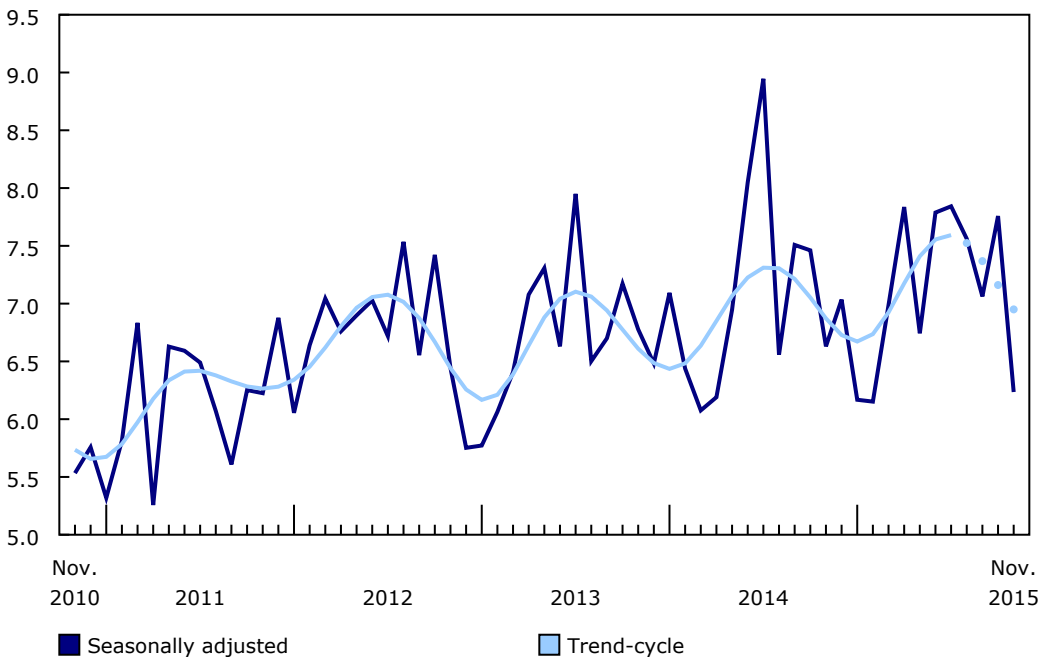
# Building permits, November 2015

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Friday, January 8, 2016

The value of building permits issued by municipalities was down 19.6% from October to \$6.2 billion in November, falling below the \$7-billion mark for first time since May 2015. The decrease was the result of widespread declines in both residential and non-residential sectors in most provinces, particularly Alberta.

**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](#).

The value of residential building permits fell 17.8% to \$4.0 billion in November, the third decline in four months. The decrease stemmed from lower construction intentions for multi-family dwellings in nine provinces, led by Alberta, which had posted strong gains the previous month. British Columbia, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories registered advances in residential construction intentions.

In the non-residential sector, the value of permits decreased 22.7% to \$2.2 billion in November, following slight gains the two previous months. Declines were posted in seven provinces, led by Alberta, with Saskatchewan a distant second. The largest increase was in Quebec, followed by British Columbia and Ontario.

## Residential sector: Large decline in construction intentions for multi-family dwellings

The value of building permits for multi-family dwellings fell 33.7% to \$1.7 billion in November, the third decline in four months. Decreases were recorded in nine provinces. Much of November's decline came from Alberta, which had posted a record high in October. Notable decreases were also registered in Quebec and Ontario. British Columbia was the lone province to post an increase.



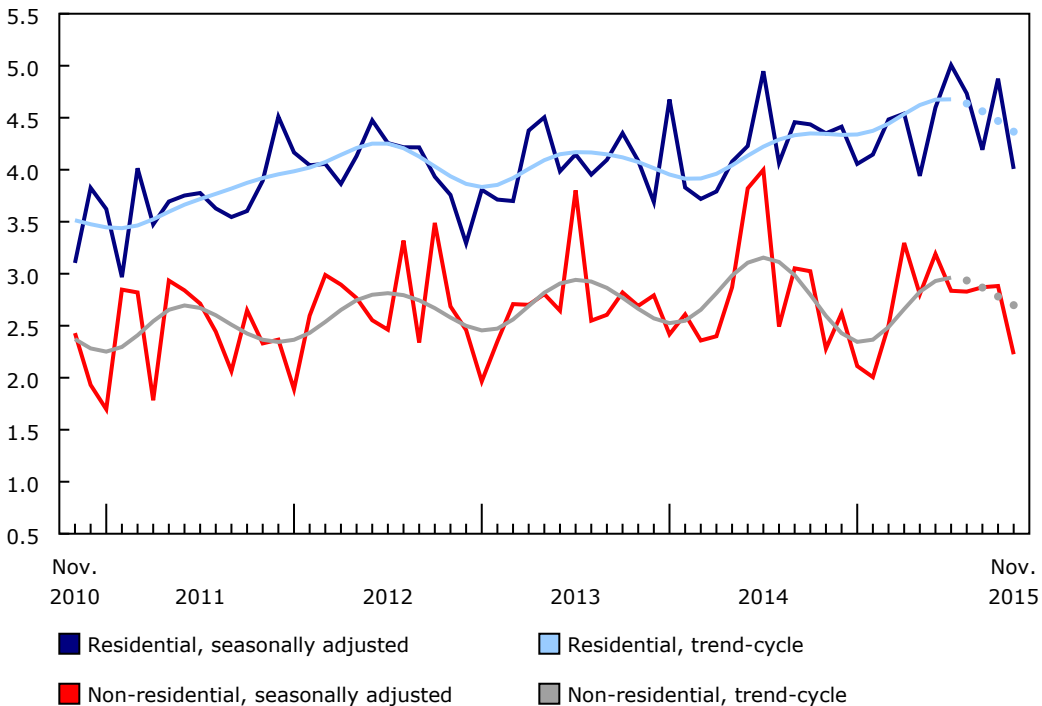
The value of building permits for single-family dwellings, which was fairly stable at around \$2.3 billion for the last three months, edged down 0.6% in November. Advances in six provinces failed to offset declines in the other four provinces, with Alberta posting the largest decrease.

Municipalities approved the construction of 15,038 new dwellings in November, down 24.3% from October. The decline was mainly attributable to multi-family dwellings, which fell 33.1% to 9,450 units. The number of single-family dwellings declined 2.5% to 5,588 units.

The high prices associated with the purchase of single-family dwellings in major Canadian cities have contributed to an increasing shift in housing demand toward multiple dwellings. Commencing in 2007, multi-family dwellings have accounted for more than half of new units approved. From January to November 2015, 66.2% of new residential units approved were multi-family dwellings.

**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: Declines in all three components**

Following slight gains the previous two months, the value of non-residential building permits declined in all three non-residential components. The decrease was largely the result of institutional and commercial buildings and, to a lesser degree, industrial buildings.

The value of permits for institutional structures fell 32.6% to \$688 million in November, following a 36.3% advance in October and a 16.4% gain in September. Lower construction intentions for special care institutions, government buildings and medical facilities largely explained the decline at the national level. Decreases were posted in six provinces, led by Alberta and Saskatchewan. The largest increases were in Quebec and British Columbia.

In the commercial component, the value of building permits was down 20.7% to \$1.1 billion in November, a third consecutive monthly decline. Lower construction intentions for office buildings, retail outlets and recreational facilities accounted for the majority of the decrease. Declines were reported in seven provinces, led by Alberta, followed by Manitoba and New Brunswick. The largest increases in the component were recorded in British Columbia and Ontario.

Industrial building construction intentions were down 6.8% to \$418 million in November, the fourth decline in five months. The decrease at the national level was largely a result of lower intentions for primary industry buildings and manufacturing plants. Declines were posted in five provinces, led by British Columbia and Alberta. Ontario and Quebec recorded the largest increases.

### **Provinces: Construction intentions down in nine provinces**

The total value of building permits was down in nine provinces in November, with Alberta posting the largest decline. Saskatchewan was a distant second. British Columbia was the lone province to report an increase.

After record high construction intentions in October, largely as a result of contractors filing permits in advance of the changes in the Alberta *Building Code*, the value of building permits in Alberta fell 56.0% to \$953 million in November. The decline was the result of lower intentions for all components, led by multi-family dwellings and, to a lesser extent, institutional structures and commercial buildings.

The value of building permits in Saskatchewan was down 54.3% to \$149 million in November. The decline was largely attributable to lower construction intentions for institutional buildings.

In British Columbia, the value of building permits was up 4.2% to \$1.1 billion. Gains were posted in every component except industrial buildings. The advance was largely the result of higher construction intentions for institutional buildings and single-family dwellings.

### **Lower construction intentions in most census metropolitan areas**

The total value of building permits was down in 20 of the 34 census metropolitan areas, with Calgary registering the largest decline, followed by Montréal and Saskatoon.

In Calgary, the decline resulted mainly from lower construction intentions for multi-family dwellings and, to a lesser extent, commercial and institutional buildings.

In Montréal, the decrease came mainly from institutional buildings, multiple-family dwellings and commercial buildings, while in Saskatoon, the decline in the value of building permits for institutional structures largely explained the decrease.

### Note to readers

Unless otherwise stated, this release presents seasonally adjusted data, which facilitates comparisons by removing the effects of seasonal variations. For 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 December 2015 building permits data will be released on February 8, 2016.

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

	November 2014	September 2015	October 2015 <sup>r</sup>	November 2015 <sup>p</sup>	October to November 2015	November 2014 to November 2015
	millions of dollars				% change	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,629.7</b>	<b>7,061.6</b>	<b>7,757.8</b>	<b>6,234.7</b>	<b>-19.6</b>	<b>-6.0</b>
Residential	4,350.3	4,191.8	4,876.2	4,008.3	-17.8	-7.9
Single <sup>1</sup>	2,357.2	2,334.4	2,348.0	2,333.1	-0.6	-1.0
Multiple	1,993.1	1,857.4	2,528.3	1,675.2	-33.7	-16.0
Non-residential	2,279.4	2,869.7	2,881.6	2,226.4	-22.7	-2.3
Industrial	381.7	554.1	449.2	418.5	-6.8	9.6
Commercial	1,228.1	1,566.9	1,412.1	1,119.8	-20.7	-8.8
Institutional	669.6	748.7	1,020.2	688.1	-32.6	2.8
	number of units				% change	
<b>Total dwellings</b>	<b>17,012</b>	<b>16,886</b>	<b>19,866</b>	<b>15,038</b>	<b>-24.3</b>	<b>-11.6</b>
Single <sup>1</sup>	6,055	5,663	5,732	5,588	-2.5	-7.7
Multiple	10,957	11,223	14,134	9,450	-33.1	-13.8

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> 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**

	November 2014	September 2015	October 2015 <sup>r</sup>	November 2015 <sup>p</sup>	October to November 2015	November 2014 to November 2015
	millions of dollars				% change	
<b>Canada</b>	<b>6,629.7</b>	<b>7,061.6</b>	<b>7,757.8</b>	<b>6,234.7</b>	<b>-19.6</b>	<b>-6.0</b>
<b>Residential</b>	<b>4,350.3</b>	<b>4,191.8</b>	<b>4,876.2</b>	<b>4,008.3</b>	<b>-17.8</b>	<b>-7.9</b>
<b>Non-residential</b>	<b>2,279.4</b>	<b>2,869.7</b>	<b>2,881.6</b>	<b>2,226.4</b>	<b>-22.7</b>	<b>-2.3</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	47.1	56.9	55.4	46.8	-15.5	-0.6
Residential	32.4	38.7	41.4	32.9	-20.5	1.6
Non-residential	14.7	18.2	14.0	13.9	-0.7	-5.4
Prince Edward Island	15.9	24.0	24.3	11.8	-51.4	-25.8
Residential	9.7	14.3	9.9	6.5	-34.8	-33.3
Non-residential	6.2	9.7	14.4	5.4	-62.8	-14.2
Nova Scotia	81.2	93.3	95.1	72.4	-23.9	-10.9
Residential	59.5	53.1	51.2	50.2	-1.8	-15.6
Non-residential	21.8	40.2	43.9	22.1	-49.6	1.8
New Brunswick	58.8	75.1	66.8	46.5	-30.4	-20.9
Residential	34.8	38.0	33.6	31.5	-6.4	-9.6
Non-residential	23.9	37.2	33.1	15.0	-54.7	-37.3
Quebec	1,130.4	1,128.8	1,122.3	1,102.4	-1.8	-2.5
Residential	701.0	692.2	673.5	596.0	-11.5	-15.0
Non-residential	429.4	436.6	448.8	506.4	12.8	17.9
Ontario	2,708.1	2,526.3	2,623.4	2,572.3	-1.9	-5.0
Residential	1,790.9	1,602.9	1,785.0	1,727.3	-3.2	-3.5
Non-residential	917.3	923.4	838.4	844.9	0.8	-7.9
Manitoba	230.9	232.5	202.7	159.1	-21.5	-31.1
Residential	144.3	147.4	103.1	95.9	-7.0	-33.5
Non-residential	86.6	85.1	99.6	63.2	-36.5	-27.1
Saskatchewan	194.1	469.6	325.6	148.8	-54.3	-23.4
Residential	107.9	79.6	84.8	86.7	2.2	-19.7
Non-residential	86.2	390.1	240.7	62.1	-74.2	-27.9
Alberta	1,313.9	1,413.2	2,165.2	953.1	-56.0	-27.5
Residential	851.1	800.6	1,314.1	570.1	-56.6	-33.0
Non-residential	462.8	612.6	851.1	383.0	-55.0	-17.2
British Columbia	834.9	1,025.3	1,061.8	1,105.9	4.2	32.5
Residential	614.1	717.1	772.3	804.9	4.2	31.1
Non-residential	220.8	308.2	289.5	301.0	4.0	36.3
Yukon	11.9	7.4	11.3	11.5	1.7	-3.4
Residential	2.5	3.6	4.9	2.9	-41.5	16.5
Non-residential	9.4	3.8	6.4	8.6	34.7	-8.6
Northwest Territories	2.5	8.9	2.3	4.1	76.3	66.9
Residential	2.1	4.1	1.7	3.5	108.9	62.1
Non-residential	0.3	4.8	0.7	0.7	-3.2	97.3
Nunavut	0.0	0.3	1.7	0.2	-89.2	...
Residential	0.0	0.2	0.8	0.0	-96.8	...
Non-residential	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.2	-83.0	...

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> 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 adjusted<sup>1</sup>**

	November 2014	September 2015	October 2015 <sup>r</sup>	November 2015 <sup>p</sup>	October to November 2015	November 2014 to November 2015
	millions of dollars				% change	
<b>Total, census metropolitan areas</b>	<b>5,202.5</b>	<b>5,407.6</b>	<b>6,272.4</b>	<b>4,740.1</b>	<b>-24.4</b>	<b>-8.9</b>
St. John's	31.1	34.5	33.7	26.1	-22.6	-16.1
Halifax	36.0	48.8	45.5	25.4	-44.1	-29.4
Moncton	20.5	23.8	32.6	13.0	-60.3	-36.7
Saint John	6.6	12.4	11.2	5.9	-47.5	-11.0
Saguenay	12.1	19.6	11.6	8.8	-24.2	-27.0
Québec	101.7	88.3	117.9	160.5	36.2	57.8
Sherbrooke	38.6	55.3	23.5	29.2	24.1	-24.3
Trois-Rivières	19.0	15.5	23.7	44.2	86.6	132.4
Montréal	622.4	586.6	594.9	406.8	-31.6	-34.6
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	227.5	289.2	214.2	227.7	6.3	0.1
Gatineau part	29.0	44.3	31.3	28.5	-8.9	-1.9
Ottawa part	198.4	244.9	183.0	199.2	8.9	0.4
Kingston	20.0	17.9	16.0	10.9	-31.8	-45.4
Peterborough	39.0	21.8	11.0	14.1	28.0	-63.9
Oshawa	44.9	94.4	50.9	83.7	64.6	86.3
Toronto	1,394.8	1,215.7	1,380.2	1,321.1	-4.3	-5.3
Hamilton	78.1	120.7	121.1	134.6	11.1	72.3
St. Catharines–Niagara	56.3	70.7	76.2	77.0	1.1	36.7
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	93.3	93.7	91.6	99.2	8.3	6.4
Brantford	32.4	21.1	12.5	24.3	95.0	-25.1
Guelph	25.4	29.7	23.1	51.1	121.6	101.2
London	98.8	85.3	85.7	72.8	-15.1	-26.4
Windsor	24.2	33.3	53.9	39.0	-27.6	61.0
Barrie	195.6	44.9	46.5	52.7	13.3	-73.0
Greater Sudbury	77.9	22.1	37.6	16.4	-56.3	-78.9
Thunder Bay	6.9	9.9	23.9	8.8	-63.1	27.3
Winnipeg	182.9	156.4	157.2	112.3	-28.6	-38.6
Regina	48.8	84.1	44.6	27.0	-39.4	-44.6
Saskatoon	66.1	133.1	244.7	60.8	-75.1	-8.0
Calgary	537.2	547.9	1,396.0	281.7	-79.8	-47.6
Edmonton	429.3	647.1	439.4	415.2	-5.5	-3.3
Kelowna	47.4	59.9	84.9	51.9	-38.9	9.5
Abbotsford–Mission	15.2	17.5	23.9	15.3	-36.1	0.3
Vancouver	515.0	635.0	698.5	762.0	9.1	47.9
Victoria	57.5	71.3	44.1	60.6	37.5	5.4

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> 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 November 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;  
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To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Monia Bergeron (613-286-5152), Investment, Science and Technology Division.