

Building permits, April 2014

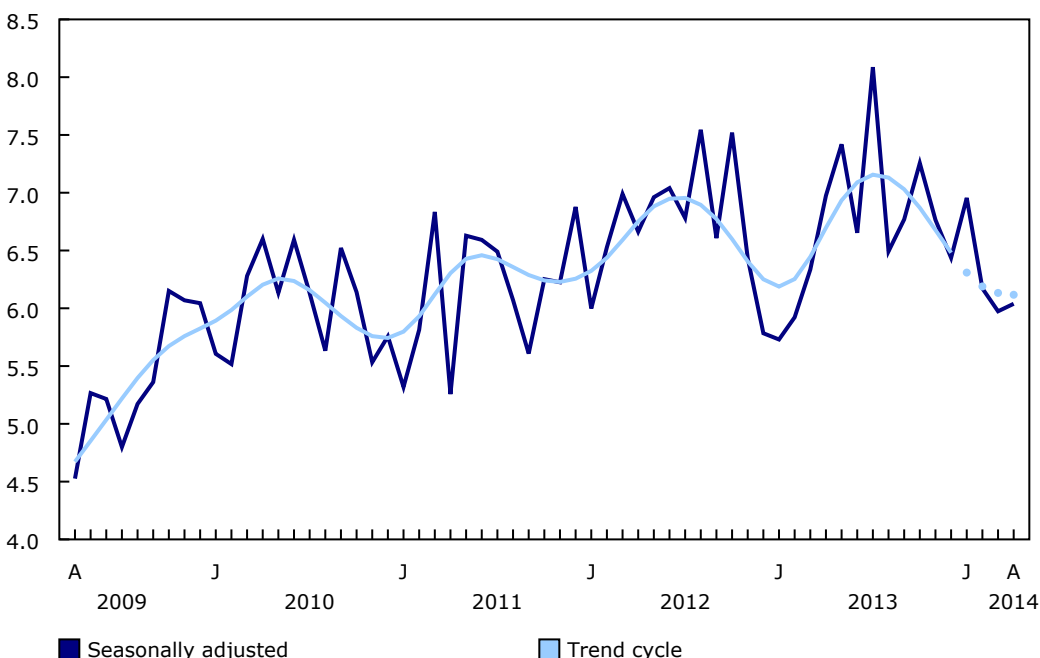
Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Thursday, June 5, 2014

Following two consecutive monthly declines, the total value of building permits issued by Canadian municipalities rose 1.1% to \$6.0 billion in April. This increase resulted from higher construction intentions in the residential sector, which more than offset the decline in the non-residential sector.

The value of permits was up in six provinces, led by Quebec, Saskatchewan and Ontario.

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 residential building permits rose 2.0% to \$3.7 billion in April, a second consecutive monthly gain. Ontario, Alberta and Nova Scotia were responsible for most of the advance. Three provinces posted declines, led by British Columbia.

Contractors took out non-residential building permits worth \$2.3 billion in April, down 0.4% from the previous month. Gains in five provinces, led by Quebec, were not enough to offset the declines in the other provinces. British Columbia posted the largest decrease.

Residential sector: Large increase in construction intentions for single-family dwellings

The value of building permits for single-family dwellings rose 2.8% to \$2.1 billion in April. The gain came in the wake of two consecutive monthly decreases. The increase in Ontario more than offset the declines in five provinces. Alberta posted the largest decrease.

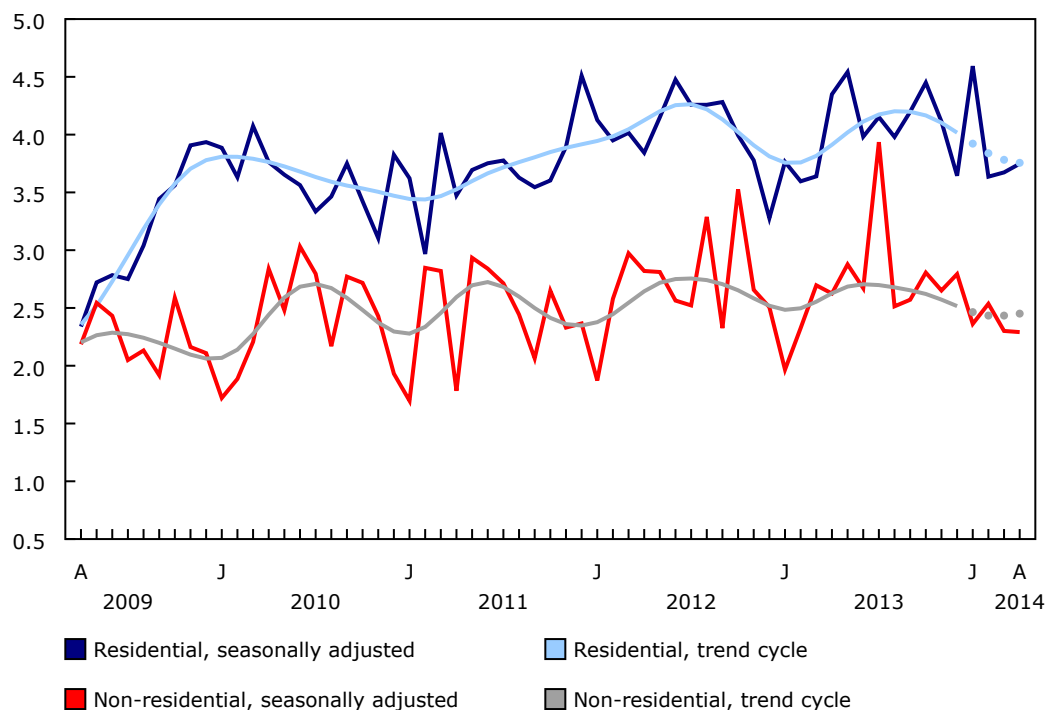


Canadian municipalities issued \$1.6 billion worth of building permits for multi-family dwellings in April, up 1.1% from March. This increase was largely the result of higher construction intentions in seven provinces. Alberta posted the largest gain, followed by Nova Scotia and Manitoba.

At the national level, Canadian municipalities approved the construction of 15,416 new dwellings, down 3.2% from the previous month. The decline was attributable to a 6.0% decrease in the number of multi-family dwellings to 9,641 units. Conversely, the number of single-family dwellings increased 2.0% to 5,775 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.

Non-residential sector: Large decline in construction intentions for commercial buildings

The value of permits in the commercial component fell 14.8% to \$1.3 billion in April, the lowest level since March 2013. The decline followed a 0.3% gain the previous month. The value of permits was down in seven provinces, led by Ontario. Lower construction intentions for retail complexes, recreational facilities, warehouses and hotels and restaurants were responsible for the decline at the national level.

The value of building permits in the institutional component rose 37.2% to \$664 million in April, after falling 28.9% the previous month. The April advance was the result of higher construction intentions for government buildings, senior citizen residences and health care facilities. All provinces posted gains except British Columbia and Prince Edward Island.

Construction intentions in the industrial component rose 10.5% to \$345 million in April, following a 12.3% decline in March. This increase was the result of higher construction intentions for manufacturing plants and utilities buildings. The advance observed in four provinces, led by Ontario, more than offset the decline in the other six provinces.

Provinces: Large gains in Quebec, Saskatchewan and Ontario

The value of permits increased in six provinces, with Quebec posting the largest advance, followed by Saskatchewan and Ontario.

The increase in Quebec was primarily attributable to higher construction intentions for institutional buildings. Institutional buildings were also responsible for the gain in Saskatchewan. In Ontario, the advance was the result of higher construction intentions for institutional buildings, single-family dwellings and industrial buildings.

Following a 12.1% gain in March, British Columbia had the largest decline in April. This decrease was due primarily to lower construction intentions for institutional buildings and multi-family dwellings. Both components posted large increases the previous month. New Brunswick was a distant second, with lower construction intentions for industrial and commercial buildings.

Higher construction intentions in most census metropolitan areas

The total value of permits was up in 19 of the 34 census metropolitan areas in April, led by Calgary, London and Halifax.

Calgary posted the largest increase, as a result of higher construction intentions for institutional buildings, commercial structures and multi-family dwellings. Multi-family dwellings contributed the most to the increase in London. Conversely, the advance in Halifax was due to multi-family dwellings, institutional buildings and, to a lesser extent, single-family dwellings.

Vancouver had the largest decline, followed by Oshawa and Edmonton. The decrease in Vancouver was mainly attributable to multi-family dwellings and institutional buildings. Oshawa's decline was primarily the result of lower construction intentions for commercial buildings, which had posted a sharp gain the previous month. In Edmonton, the decrease came from institutional and residential 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 2,400 municipalities representing 95% of the 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 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

	April 2013	February 2014	March 2014 ^r	April 2014 ^P	March to April 2014	April 2013 to April 2014
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total	6,974.5	6,172.3	5,973.6	6,039.1	1.1	-13.4
Residential	4,349.4	3,636.0	3,672.7	3,747.9	2.0	-13.8
Single ¹	2,213.5	2,169.7	2,089.3	2,147.1	2.8	-3.0
Multiple	2,135.9	1,466.3	1,583.4	1,600.8	1.1	-25.1
Non-residential	2,625.1	2,536.3	2,300.9	2,291.2	-0.4	-12.7
Industrial	410.6	356.3	312.4	345.1	10.5	-16.0
Commercial	1,493.7	1,499.5	1,504.5	1,282.3	-14.8	-14.2
Institutional	720.8	680.4	483.9	663.8	37.2	-7.9
	number of units				% change	
Total dwellings	19,389	14,117	15,920	15,416	-3.2	-20.5
Single ¹	6,209	5,712	5,661	5,775	2.0	-7.0
Multiple	13,180	8,405	10,259	9,641	-6.0	-26.9

^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

	April 2013	February 2014	March 2014 ^r	April 2014 ^p	March to April 2014	April 2013 to April 2014
	millions of dollars				% change	
Canada	6,974.5	6,172.3	5,973.6	6,039.1	1.1	-13.4
Residential	4,349.4	3,636.0	3,672.7	3,747.9	2.0	-13.8
Non-residential	2,625.1	2,536.3	2,300.9	2,291.2	-0.4	-12.7
Newfoundland and Labrador	76.8	42.2	41.7	58.4	40.1	-23.9
Residential	59.5	29.2	29.2	39.2	34.1	-34.1
Non-residential	17.3	13.1	12.5	19.2	54.2	11.3
Prince Edward Island	14.5	23.0	14.5	12.0	-17.2	-17.6
Residential	11.5	10.2	4.8	8.7	81.4	-24.8
Non-residential	3.0	12.8	9.7	3.3	-66.0	10.0
Nova Scotia	91.3	58.1	90.9	129.3	42.2	41.6
Residential	55.5	46.7	52.1	76.8	47.2	38.3
Non-residential	35.8	11.5	38.8	52.5	35.5	46.6
New Brunswick	187.5	76.9	57.5	37.2	-35.4	-80.2
Residential	40.3	43.9	21.8	21.9	0.5	-45.6
Non-residential	147.2	33.0	35.7	15.2	-57.3	-89.6
Quebec	1,237.0	1,199.1	1,141.4	1,218.0	6.7	-1.5
Residential	811.3	730.3	700.9	692.4	-1.2	-14.7
Non-residential	425.7	468.7	440.4	525.7	19.3	23.5
Ontario	2,459.8	2,485.7	2,137.4	2,182.6	2.1	-11.3
Residential	1,581.5	1,322.1	1,330.8	1,399.2	5.1	-11.5
Non-residential	878.3	1,163.7	806.6	783.4	-2.9	-10.8
Manitoba	170.9	141.0	145.0	185.8	28.2	8.7
Residential	146.6	98.6	102.3	117.1	14.5	-20.1
Non-residential	24.4	42.4	42.7	68.7	60.9	181.9
Saskatchewan	244.5	185.6	193.1	249.2	29.0	1.9
Residential	184.4	103.6	130.3	125.5	-3.6	-31.9
Non-residential	60.1	82.0	62.9	123.7	96.7	105.7
Alberta	1,479.9	1,190.5	1,288.1	1,280.4	-0.6	-13.5
Residential	746.4	761.4	750.4	791.2	5.4	6.0
Non-residential	733.5	429.1	537.7	489.2	-9.0	-33.3
British Columbia	979.3	759.4	851.6	679.4	-20.2	-30.6
Residential	698.5	485.6	546.4	471.6	-13.7	-32.5
Non-residential	280.8	273.8	305.1	207.8	-31.9	-26.0
Yukon	2.9	3.8	7.1	3.4	-52.2	16.0
Residential	2.1	1.8	2.3	2.7	21.7	30.3
Non-residential	0.8	2.0	4.8	0.6	-87.0	-21.9
Northwest Territories	8.3	2.0	1.3	3.5	176.2	-57.6
Residential	1.9	0.2	1.2	1.6	27.3	-19.5
Non-residential	6.4	1.8	0.1	2.0	...	-69.1
Nunavut	21.9	4.9	4.2	0.0	-100.0	-100.0
Residential	10.0	2.5	0.2	0.0	-100.0	-100.0
Non-residential	11.9	2.4	4.0	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

	April 2013	February 2014	March 2014 ^r	April 2014 ^p	March to April 2014	April 2013 to April 2014
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total, census metropolitan areas	5,317.3	4,588.0	4,647.7	4,600.1	-1.0	-13.5
St. John's	40.0	27.7	24.3	40.6	67.1	1.5
Halifax	60.1	25.9	49.5	79.8	61.1	32.8
Moncton	56.1	12.5	9.5	10.0	5.4	-82.1
Saint John	22.6	26.3	28.0	7.4	-73.5	-67.1
Saguenay	32.2	28.0	28.2	24.1	-14.5	-25.0
Québec	124.4	102.7	178.4	143.3	-19.7	15.2
Sherbrooke	62.9	32.4	26.1	28.2	8.1	-55.2
Trois-Rivières	28.8	27.2	29.6	23.8	-19.4	-17.2
Montréal	557.7	561.7	520.1	537.5	3.3	-3.6
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	256.3	296.8	284.6	212.9	-25.2	-16.9
Gatineau part	56.4	55.5	64.9	37.4	-42.3	-33.6
Ottawa part	199.9	241.3	219.8	175.5	-20.2	-12.2
Kingston	23.8	261.1	16.7	18.7	12.0	-21.5
Peterborough	23.7	5.1	4.9	8.9	81.1	-62.5
Oshawa	34.7	65.3	169.2	75.0	-55.7	116.4
Toronto	1,151.6	1,064.0	1,032.2	1,061.0	2.8	-7.9
Hamilton	127.7	103.4	144.4	142.3	-1.4	11.4
St. Catharines–Niagara	92.1	47.2	41.4	45.2	9.2	-50.9
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	103.9	110.4	65.0	85.2	31.1	-17.9
Brantford	25.0	7.5	7.4	11.2	51.5	-55.1
Guelph	72.4	22.3	17.6	16.5	-6.2	-77.2
London	130.1	86.8	46.3	130.2	181.0	0.1
Windsor	30.1	16.4	30.0	46.7	55.7	55.0
Barrie	21.3	34.7	18.3	29.5	60.7	38.1
Greater Sudbury	8.7	7.3	33.7	11.5	-65.7	32.0
Thunder Bay	9.4	4.3	5.2	12.0	130.0	28.2
Winnipeg	121.0	90.4	101.5	129.5	27.6	7.0
Regina	58.3	76.0	39.7	59.3	49.3	1.8
Saskatoon	114.3	66.6	100.2	89.1	-11.0	-22.0
Calgary	778.2	427.7	446.2	597.6	33.9	-23.2
Edmonton	333.0	361.0	517.2	456.3	-11.8	37.0
Kelowna	57.1	31.5	34.3	37.3	8.5	-34.8
Abbotsford–Mission	24.3	9.7	21.0	19.3	-7.8	-20.6
Vancouver	636.8	516.0	501.5	374.2	-25.4	-41.2
Victoria	98.3	32.0	75.6	35.8	-52.6	-63.5

^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 April 2014 issue of *Building Permits* (64-001-X) will soon be available.

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

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.