

News Digest

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billion to \$238.8 billion, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

The **Conference Board Employment Trends Index** increased in December to 129.3, up from 128.3 in November. This represents a 2.6 percent gain in the ETI compared to a year ago.

Privately owned **housing starts** in December were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,149,000. This is 2.5 percent below the revised November rate of 1,179,000, but 6.4 percent above the December 2014 estimate of 1,080,000.

The **NFIB Small Business Optimism Index** rose 0.4 points in December to 95.2, well below the 42-year average of 98.

The value of **Canadian building permits** issued by municipalities was down 19.6 percent from October to C\$6.2 billion (US\$4.4 billion) in November, according to Statistics Canada.

Canadian wholesale sales rose 1.8 percent to C\$55.9 billion (US\$38.3 billion) in November, according to Statistics Canada.

Canadian manufacturing sales increased 1 percent to C\$50.8 billion (US\$34.8 billion) in

November, led by higher motor vehicle sales in Ontario, according to Statistics Canada.

Compared with October 2015, **European seasonally adjusted industrial production** in November fell by 0.7 percent in the euro area (EA19) and by 0.6 percent in the EU28, according to estimates from Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. Year-over-year industrial production increased by 1.1 percent in the euro area and by 1.4 percent in the EU28.

Manufacturer News

Praxair Surface Technologies Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Danbury, CT-based **Praxair Inc.**, and **GE Aviation** have entered into an agreement to form a joint venture for the development and application of specialized coatings.

Henkel, has named Hans Van Bylen, executive vice president of Henkel's Beauty Care business, as successor to CEO Kasper Rorsted, who resigned.

WD-40 Company, San Diego, CA, reported sales for the first quarter ended Nov. 30, 2015, of \$92.5 million, a decrease of 4 percent compared to the same period a year ago. Profit increased 11.8 percent to \$12.1 million.

Calculation of MDM Inflation Index for December 2015

| | BLS Price Indices Dec '15 | BLS Price Indices Nov '15 | BLS Price Indices Dec '14 | Weighted % Sales Weight | Weighted Indices Dec '15 (1)X(4) | % Change Dec '15 Nov '15 | % Change Dec '15 Dec '14 | |
|---------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 1136 | Abr. Prod. | 580.4 | 568.2 | 572.9 | 19.1 | 110.85 | 2.14 | 1.30 |
| 1135 | Cutting Tools | 506.2 | 506.5 | 497.6 | 18.9 | 95.68 | -0.05 | 1.74 |
| 1145 | Power Trans. | 815.1 | 814.4 | 806.3 | 15.4 | 125.52 | 0.08 | 1.08 |
| 1081 | Fasteners | 512.6 | 512.8 | 508.5 | 9.0 | 46.13 | -0.05 | 0.80 |
| 1149.01 | Valves, etc. | 961.8 | 961.3 | 964.5 | 7.6 | 73.09 | 0.05 | -0.29 |
| 1132 | Power Tools | 375.5 | 371.1 | 362.5 | 6.5 | 24.41 | 1.19 | 3.61 |
| 1144 | Mat. Handling | 596.6 | 596.0 | 583.7 | 6.2 | 36.99 | 0.10 | 2.21 |
| 0713.03 | Belting | 831.4 | 831.4 | 832.1 | 6.1 | 50.72 | 0.00 | -0.08 |
| 1042 | Hand Tools | 779.2 | 779.2 | 777.8 | 8.1 | 63.11 | 0.00 | 0.18 |
| 108 | Misc. Metal | 471.2 | 472.9 | 478.9 | 3.1 | 14.61 | -0.36 | -1.59 |

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|----------------------|-------|-------------------------------|--------|------|------|
| "New" December Index | 335.0 | December Inflation Index | 641.11 | 0.42 | 0.95 |
| "New" November Index | 333.6 | November Inflation Index | 638.46 | | |
| | | December 2014 Inflation Index | 635.07 | | |

New index reflects 1977-100 base other #: 1967 To convert multiply by .52247