

Building permits, May 2014

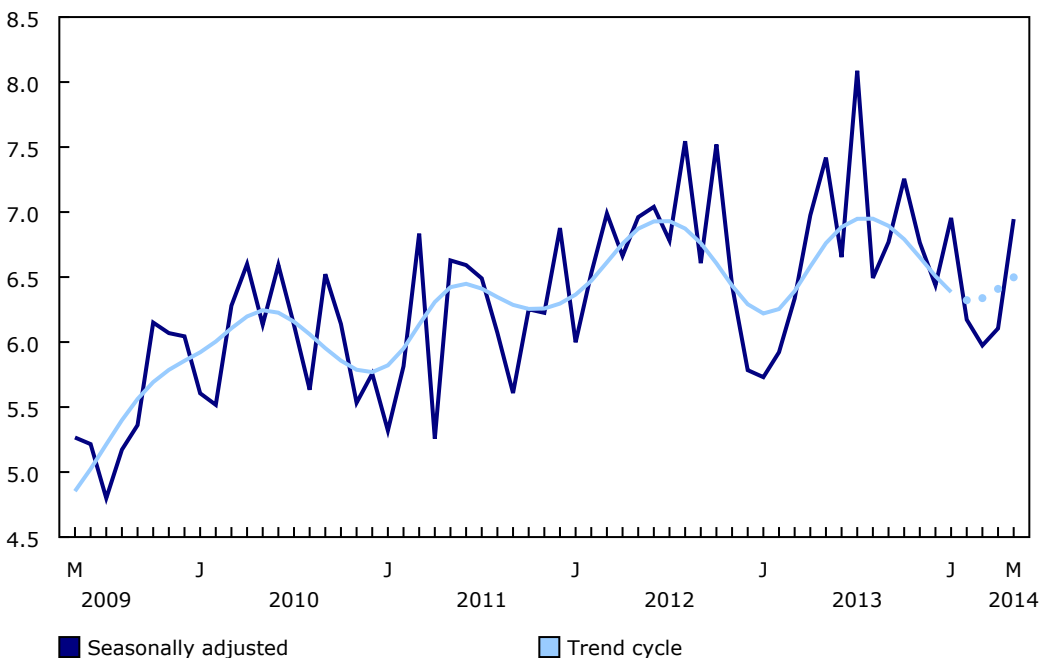
Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Monday, July 7, 2014

Municipalities issued building permits worth \$6.9 billion in May, up 13.8% from April. This followed a 2.2% rise in the previous month. The increase in May resulted primarily from higher construction intentions for commercial buildings in Ontario and Manitoba, as well as multi-family dwellings in British Columbia. The total value of permits has been on a slight upward trend since the beginning of 2014.

Gains were posted in every province in May, except Quebec and Nova Scotia. Ontario, British Columbia and Manitoba registered the largest increases.

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.

Construction intentions for residential dwellings rose 9.5% to \$4.1 billion in May, the third consecutive monthly increase. Higher residential construction intentions were registered in eight provinces, led by British Columbia, followed by Ontario and the other western provinces. Nova Scotia posted the largest decline following two consecutive monthly gains.

In the non-residential sector, the value of permits rose 20.8% to \$2.8 billion. Gains were posted in seven provinces, led by Ontario and Manitoba. Quebec, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia posted declines following large increases in all three provinces in April.

Residential sector: Higher construction intentions in both multi-family and single-family dwellings

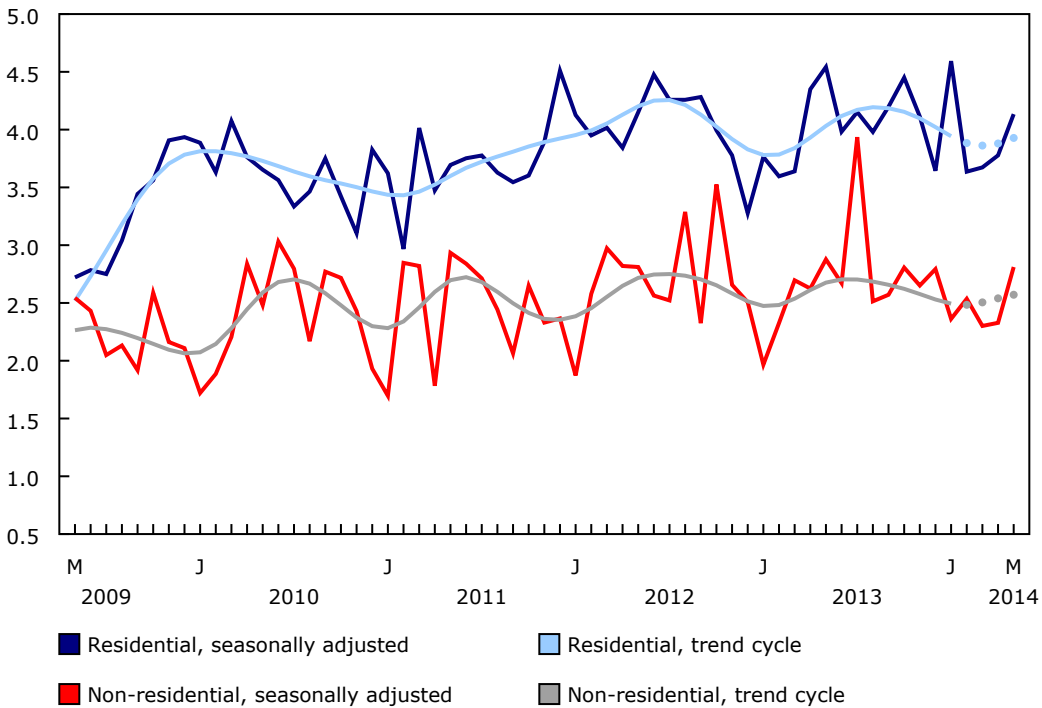
Construction intentions for multi-family dwellings rose 16.1% to \$1.9 billion in May, a third consecutive monthly advance. Higher construction intentions for apartments and apartments-condominium projects in British Columbia and, to a lesser extent, Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan contributed to this gain. Nova Scotia, Quebec and Prince Edward Island posted declines.

The value of building permits for single-family dwellings rose 4.6% to \$2.3 billion in May. This was the second consecutive monthly increase. Advances were posted in eight provinces, with Ontario recording the largest gain. British Columbia and Saskatchewan registered declines.

Canadian municipalities approved the construction of 17,415 new dwellings in May, up 11.8% from April. This increase was mostly attributable to multi-family dwellings, which rose 17.3% to 11,330 units. The number of single-family dwellings increased 2.8% to 6,085 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: Significant rise in the commercial component

In May, the value of non-residential building permits registered its largest monthly gain since July 2013. This advance resulted from a strong increase in construction intentions for commercial buildings.

Construction intentions for commercial buildings rose 39.4% to \$1.8 billion, the highest level so far in 2014. The advance came from higher construction intentions in a variety of commercial buildings, including warehouses, retail complexes, recreational facilities as well as hotels and restaurants. Gains were posted in nine provinces, with Ontario and Manitoba registering the largest advances.

In the industrial component, the value of permits rose 22.4% to \$441 million. The increase was largely attributable to higher construction intentions for manufacturing plants in Quebec and Alberta, as well as primary industry buildings in British Columbia. Declines were registered in three provinces, with Ontario posting the largest decrease.

In the institutional component, the value of permits fell 16.6% to \$555 million. This followed a 37.5% increase in April. The value of institutional building permits was down in five provinces. The decrease in May resulted from lower construction intentions for government buildings in Quebec and medical facilities in Saskatchewan. Alberta and British Columbia recorded large increases, as a result of higher construction intentions for educational institutions.

Provinces: Ontario posts the largest advance

The total value of permits was up in eight provinces in May, led by Ontario, followed by British Columbia and Manitoba.

Ontario posted substantial increases in commercial and single-family construction intentions.

The increase in British Columbia was mostly the result of higher construction intentions for multi-family dwellings and non-residential buildings. Gains in commercial buildings and multi-family dwellings led the increase in Manitoba.

In contrast, the decline in Quebec was the result of lower construction intentions for institutional buildings and multi-family dwellings.

Higher construction intentions in most census metropolitan areas

Construction intentions were up in 23 of Canada's 34 census metropolitan areas in May.

The largest increases were in Toronto, followed by Vancouver and Winnipeg. In Toronto, the advance was largely attributable to commercial buildings and multi-family dwellings. The gain in Vancouver was mainly the result of higher construction intentions for multi-family dwellings, whereas in Winnipeg, the increase came from commercial buildings.

In contrast, London, Hamilton and Québec posted the largest declines in the total value of building permits. Lower construction intentions in all components, except single-family dwellings, were the reason for the decrease in London. In Hamilton, the decline originated from institutional buildings and multi-family dwellings, while in Québec, commercial buildings were mainly responsible for 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 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 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.

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

	May 2013	March 2014	April 2014 ^r	May 2014 ^P	April to May 2014	May 2013 to May 2014
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total	7,418.8	5,973.6	6,105.1	6,945.5	13.8	-6.4
Residential	4,541.5	3,672.7	3,777.2	4,134.3	9.5	-9.0
Single ¹	2,306.9	2,089.3	2,182.6	2,283.7	4.6	-1.0
Multiple	2,234.6	1,583.4	1,594.6	1,850.6	16.1	-17.2
Non-residential	2,877.4	2,300.9	2,327.8	2,811.2	20.8	-2.3
Industrial	638.0	312.4	359.9	440.5	22.4	-31.0
Commercial	1,534.6	1,504.5	1,302.4	1,815.9	39.4	18.3
Institutional	704.8	483.9	665.5	554.8	-16.6	-21.3
	number of units				% change	
Total dwellings	20,113	15,920	15,579	17,415	11.8	-13.4
Single ¹	6,411	5,661	5,919	6,085	2.8	-5.1
Multiple	13,702	10,259	9,660	11,330	17.3	-17.3

^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

	May 2013	March 2014	April 2014 ^r	May 2014 ^p	April to May 2014	May 2013 to May 2014
	millions of dollars				% change	
Canada	7,418.8	5,973.6	6,105.1	6,945.5	13.8	-6.4
Residential	4,541.5	3,672.7	3,777.2	4,134.3	9.5	-9.0
Non-residential	2,877.4	2,300.9	2,327.8	2,811.2	20.8	-2.3
Newfoundland and Labrador	86.1	41.7	59.1	77.9	31.8	-9.5
Residential	60.6	29.2	39.8	48.7	22.6	-19.6
Non-residential	25.5	12.5	19.4	29.2	50.8	14.5
Prince Edward Island	40.7	14.5	12.7	17.2	35.4	-57.6
Residential	13.8	4.8	9.0	9.4	5.1	-31.7
Non-residential	26.9	9.7	3.8	7.8	106.9	-70.9
Nova Scotia	145.3	90.9	129.2	98.6	-23.7	-32.2
Residential	105.6	52.1	76.7	53.3	-30.6	-49.6
Non-residential	39.7	38.8	52.5	45.3	-13.7	14.2
New Brunswick	62.3	57.5	37.6	67.0	78.1	7.6
Residential	44.2	21.8	22.4	33.8	50.9	-23.5
Non-residential	18.1	35.7	15.2	33.2	118.0	83.6
Quebec	1,517.2	1,141.4	1,190.8	1,122.7	-5.7	-26.0
Residential	819.1	700.9	689.9	679.5	-1.5	-17.0
Non-residential	698.1	440.4	500.9	443.2	-11.5	-36.5
Ontario	2,756.2	2,137.4	2,204.2	2,542.5	15.3	-7.8
Residential	1,775.1	1,330.8	1,416.6	1,521.3	7.4	-14.3
Non-residential	981.1	806.6	787.6	1,021.3	29.7	4.1
Manitoba	264.9	145.0	195.5	384.2	96.5	45.1
Residential	124.8	102.3	122.2	166.8	36.4	33.7
Non-residential	140.1	42.7	73.3	217.5	196.7	55.2
Saskatchewan	282.9	193.1	250.4	266.2	6.3	-5.9
Residential	142.7	130.3	126.0	165.7	31.5	16.2
Non-residential	140.2	62.9	124.4	100.5	-19.2	-28.3
Alberta	1,411.9	1,288.1	1,341.6	1,473.5	9.8	4.4
Residential	851.0	750.4	801.3	845.7	5.5	-0.6
Non-residential	560.9	537.7	540.3	627.8	16.2	11.9
British Columbia	821.1	851.6	676.8	884.3	30.7	7.7
Residential	590.4	546.4	469.0	605.4	29.1	2.5
Non-residential	230.7	305.1	207.8	278.9	34.2	20.9
Yukon	13.9	7.1	3.4	9.8	190.5	-29.3
Residential	5.0	2.3	2.8	3.7	33.4	-26.0
Non-residential	8.9	4.8	0.6	6.2	887.3	-31.2
Northwest Territories	11.2	1.3	3.7	1.4	-62.4	-87.7
Residential	5.7	1.2	1.7	1.0	-40.1	-81.9
Non-residential	5.6	0.1	2.0	0.4	-81.8	-93.5
Nunavut	5.0	4.2	0.0	0.0	...	-100.0
Residential	3.5	0.2	0.0	0.0	...	-100.0
Non-residential	1.5	4.0	0.0	0.0	...	-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

	May 2013	March 2014	April 2014 ^r	May 2014 ^p	April to May 2014	May 2013 to May 2014
	millions of dollars				% change	
Total, census metropolitan areas	5,614.8	4,647.7	4,599.9	5,489.1	19.3	-2.2
St. John's	46.1	24.3	41.6	46.8	12.6	1.7
Halifax	101.9	49.5	79.6	58.2	-26.9	-42.9
Moncton	19.5	9.5	10.0	29.5	196.3	51.6
Saint John	9.3	28.0	7.4	8.6	17.1	-7.2
Saguenay	35.5	28.2	23.8	23.9	0.5	-32.7
Québec	201.6	178.4	141.6	105.2	-25.7	-47.8
Sherbrooke	35.3	26.1	28.3	26.5	-6.1	-24.8
Trois-Rivières	26.3	29.6	23.6	29.5	25.0	12.4
Montréal	809.4	520.1	513.9	583.7	13.6	-27.9
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	280.6	284.6	219.1	198.9	-9.2	-29.1
Gatineau part	56.6	64.9	37.1	47.4	27.8	-16.3
Ottawa part	224.0	219.8	182.1	151.6	-16.7	-32.3
Kingston	15.8	16.7	18.9	21.9	16.3	38.5
Peterborough	17.0	4.9	8.5	20.0	136.4	17.4
Oshawa	41.5	169.2	75.7	82.4	8.9	98.5
Toronto	1,413.5	1,032.2	1,065.9	1,467.0	37.6	3.8
Hamilton	100.1	144.4	143.1	93.1	-34.9	-7.0
St. Catharines–Niagara	146.8	41.4	45.6	41.9	-8.0	-71.4
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	120.3	65.0	85.6	98.1	14.5	-18.5
Brantford	11.3	7.4	11.3	15.0	33.1	32.7
Guelph	66.8	17.6	16.6	20.8	25.5	-68.8
London	82.2	46.3	130.9	61.6	-52.9	-25.0
Windsor	46.3	30.0	47.1	36.7	-22.0	-20.8
Barrie	22.5	18.3	29.8	36.6	22.9	62.9
Greater Sudbury	52.4	33.7	11.6	31.8	173.2	-39.3
Thunder Bay	22.7	5.2	12.1	19.5	61.0	-14.2
Winnipeg	178.0	101.5	136.1	304.5	123.8	71.0
Regina	71.6	39.7	60.6	45.2	-25.4	-36.9
Saskatoon	109.2	100.2	89.4	162.4	81.6	48.7
Calgary	463.1	446.2	599.6	636.0	6.1	37.3
Edmonton	436.6	517.2	458.0	487.5	6.4	11.7
Kelowna	28.0	34.3	37.1	29.5	-20.4	5.5
Abbotsford–Mission	19.4	21.0	19.3	10.1	-47.5	-47.9
Vancouver	557.7	501.5	372.8	594.2	59.4	6.5
Victoria	26.4	75.6	35.6	62.1	74.3	134.7

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

Building permits data for June will be released on August 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 Jérémie Bennett (613-951-0793), Investment, Science and Technology Division.