

U.S. wholesale prices increased 1.1 percent in March, seasonally adjusted, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported. This advance followed a 0.3 percent rise in February and a 1.0 percent increase in January. The rise in the index for finished goods less foods and energy (core inflation) slowed to 0.2 percent from 0.5 percent in February.

February U.S. manufacturing technology consumption totaled \$308.50 million, according to the Association for Manufacturing Technology and the American Machine Tool Distributors' Association. This total, as reported by companies participating in the USMTC program, was down 4 percent from January, but up 4.4 percent from February 2007. With a year-to-date total of \$624.28 million, 2008 is up 1.2 percent.

Canadian output in January rebounded smartly from a sharp drop in December, reflecting a widespread increase in demand. This was consistent with employment, which picked up steadily through the first quarter.

Sales of Canadian manufactured goods rose 1.6 percent to \$50.1 billion in February, due in part to a gradual bounce-back by Canada's motor vehicle industry. This marked the second successive increase in manufacturing sales, as manufacturers continued to make up ground lost after a tough December (-3.7 percent).

Industrial production rose 0.3 percent in March after having dropped 0.7 percent in February. For the first quarter as a whole, output declined at an annual rate of 0.1 percent.

Huttig Building Products, Inc., distributor of millwork, building materials and wood products, reported a net loss of \$9.8 million for the first quarter 2008, compared with a net loss of \$3.4 million in the year-ago period. Sales fell 25 percent to \$166.8 million.

French electrical manufacturer **Legrand** has acquired Estap, manufacturer of VDI enclosures and cabinets in Turkey. The move underscores Legrand's accelerating expansion on emerging markets, which accounted for 50 percent of its organic growth in 2007.

Watsco, Inc., Coconut Grove, FL, reported revenues for the first quarter 2008, were up 3 percent to \$380 million compared with the same period a year ago. The increase includes 63 locations opened or acquired over the past 12 months, adding \$49 million to sales in the quarter. On a same-store basis, sales fell 10 percent.

Chicago, IL-based **Grainger** reported sales of \$1.7 billion for the quarter ended March 31, 2008, up 7 percent from the prior-year first

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Calculation of MDM Inflation Index for March 2008

	BLS Price Indices Mar. '08	BLS Price Indices Feb. '08	BLS Price Indices Mar. '07	% Sales Weight	Weighted Indices Mar. '08 (1)X(4)	% Change Mar. '08 Feb. '08	% Change Mar. '08 Mar. '07
1136 Abr. Prod.	491.9	487.1	458.9	19.1	93.95	0.98	7.18
1135 Cutting Tools	440.6	439.5	436.5	18.9	83.28	0.25	0.93
1145 Power Trans.	654.5	654.2	634.8	15.4	100.79	0.05	3.10
1081 Fasteners	476.4	468.8	437.2	9.0	42.87	1.61	8.96
1149.01 Valves, etc.	808.6	798.1	767.0	7.6	61.45	1.32	5.42
1132 Power Tools	333.7	328.8	329.0	6.5	21.69	1.48	1.41
1144 Mat. Handling	479.6	478.5	460.1	6.2	29.74	0.24	4.24
0713.03 Belting	563.0	551.7	540.1	6.1	34.34	2.04	4.23
1042 Hand Tools	696.7	696.0	676.3	8.1	56.43	0.10	3.02
108 Misc. Metal	433.1	427.2	415.0	3.1	13.43	1.39	4.35
"New" March Index	281.1	March Inflation Index			537.97	0.74	4.24
"New" February Index	279.0	February Inflation Index			534.02		
		March 2007 Inflation Index			516.08		

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