



PRESS RELEASE



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Average Rental Vacancy Rates Rise to 1.7 Per Cent

OTTAWA, Ontario, November 26, 2002 — The average rental apartment vacancy rate in Canada's 28 metropolitan areas¹ rose to 1.7% in October this year from 1.1% in October 2001, according to the Rental Market Survey released by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) today. This is the first increase in the vacancy rate since 1992.

"Many factors contributed to the increased vacancy rates over the past year", said Michel Laurence, Chief Economist at CMHC's Market Analysis Centre "Foremost among them are low mortgage rates, which have reduced the carrying cost of home ownership. This encouraged many people to make the switch from renting to owning, causing vacancy rates to go up in many metropolitan areas."

Seventeen of Canada's 28 metropolitan areas have higher vacancy rates than one year ago. Highest recorded vacancy rates are in, Saint John (NB), Sudbury, Chicoutimi-Jonquière and Thunder Bay. Lowest vacancy rates recorded are in Québec City, Gatineau, Montréal and Kingston. All had rates under one per cent.

Vacancy rates were higher in eight of Ontario's 11 metropolitan areas. Of the eight metropolitan areas, with higher rates, Toronto, Kitchener, Ottawa, Oshawa and Windsor increased by one percentage point or more.

In Quebec, two of six metropolitan areas had higher vacancy rates than 2001. The greatest relative increase occurred in Chicoutimi-Jonquière (4.9 from 4.4%), while Montréal's vacancy rate rose to 0.7% from 0.6%. Vacancy rates in Gatineau, Québec City, Sherbrooke and Trois-Rivières declined.

In the Prairies and British Columbia, vacancy rates went up in five of eight metropolitan areas, Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Vancouver and Victoria. Abbotsford, Regina and Winnipeg experienced declines.

In Atlantic Canada, the vacancy rate in Saint John (NB) rose to 6.3%, the highest rate of all Canadian metropolitan areas. Rates increased slightly in St. John's (NFLD) and fell slightly in Halifax.

CMHC's annual rent survey shows that average rents for two-bedroom apartments increased in all metropolitan areas except, Thunder Bay where it remained unchanged. The greatest increase occurred in Edmonton at 8.4%. Halifax posted the second-largest increase at 4.6%. Average rents in Gatineau, Sudbury, Montréal and Windsor also rose more than 4%.

The highest average monthly rents for two-bedroom apartments remained in Toronto (\$1,047), Vancouver (\$954) and Ottawa (\$930). The lowest average rents were in Trois-Rivières (\$431) and Chicoutimi-Jonquière (\$440).

CMHC's Rental Market Survey is conducted yearly in October, to provide vacancy rate and rent information on privately initiated apartment structures containing at least three rental units.

For further information contact:

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¹ census metropolitan areas as defined by Statistics Canada

Note: Tables of vacancy rates and rents are attached.

For local rental market information, please contact your local CMHC branch.

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Vacancy Rates in Apartment Structures of Three Units and Over Privately Initiated, in Metropolitan Areas

	October 1998	October 1999	October 2000	October 2001	October 2002
Atlantic Region					
St.John's	15.4	9.2	3.8	2.5	2.7
Halifax	5.5	3.6	3.6	2.8	2.7
Saint John	7.3	5.2	3.4	5.6	6.3
Quebec Region					
Chicoutimi-Jonquière	4.8	4.9	4.4	4.4	4.9
Gatineau	6.7	4.4	1.4	0.6	0.5
Montréal	4.7	3.0	1.5	0.6	0.7
Québec	5.2	3.3	1.6	0.8	0.3
Sherbrooke	7.3	7.6	4.7	2.3	1.8
Trois-Rivières	8.5	7.9	6.8	4.7	3.0
Ontario Region					
Hamilton	3.2	1.9	1.7	1.3	1.6
Kingston*	5.4	3.4	1.8	1.5	0.9
Kitchener	1.5	1.0	0.7	0.9	2.3
London	4.5	3.5	2.2	1.6	2.0
Oshawa	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.3	2.3
Ottawa	2.1	0.7	0.2	0.8	1.9
St.Catharines-Niagara	4.6	3.2	2.6	1.9	2.4
Sudbury	9.4	11.1	7.7	5.7	5.1
Thunder Bay	9.3	7.5	5.8	5.8	4.7
Toronto	0.8	0.9	0.6	0.9	2.5
Windsor	4.3	2.7	1.9	2.9	3.9

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Prairies Region					
Calgary	0.6	2.8	1.3	1.2	2.9
Edmonton	1.9	2.2	1.4	0.9	1.7
Regina	1.7	1.4	1.4	2.1	1.9
Saskatoon	0.8	0.9	1.7	2.9	3.7
Winnipeg	4.0	3.0	2.0	1.4	1.2
British Columbia Region					
Abbotsford*	7.4	6.7	3.7	2.4	2.0
Vancouver	2.7	2.7	1.4	1.0	1.4
Victoria	3.8	3.6	1.8	0.5	1.5
Total (1)	3.4	2.6	1.6	1.1	1.7

(1)Weighted average of Metropolitan Areas Surveyed.

* Data prior to 2002 is based on the census agglomeration definition, 2002 data is based on the census metropolitan area definition.

Weighted Average Rent by Metropolitan Area				
Privately Initiated Three Apartment Units and Over				
	One-Bedroom		Two-Bedroom	
	October 2001	October 2002	October 2001	October 2002
Atlantic Region	\$	\$	\$	\$
St.John's	489	510	575	589
Halifax	554	572	673	704
Saint John	406	424	483	492
Quebec Region				
Chicoutimi-Jonquière	364	370	439	440
Gatineau	485	509	573	599
Montréal	476	505	529	552
Québec	473	489	538	550
Sherbrooke	366	369	446	456
Trois-Rivières	358	370	419	431
Ontario Region				
Hamilton	608	627	740	765
Kingston*	594	598	709	727
Kitchener	615	638	722	750
London	547	566	683	705
Oshawa	692	713	799	819
Ottawa	762	767	914	930

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St.Catharines	569	583	680	695
Sudbury	500	513	620	647
Thunder Bay	529	532	657	657
Toronto	866	891	1,027	1,047
Windsor	618	638	738	769
Prairies Region				
Calgary	649	657	783	804
Edmonton	537	575	654	709
Regina	476	480	568	581
Saskatoon	460	461	558	567
Winnipeg	476	490	605	622
British Columbia Region				
Abbotsford*	517	530	645	650
Vancouver	726	743	919	954
Victoria	592	605	751	771

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