



PRESS RELEASE



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Starts Pull Back in April

OTTAWA, Ontario, May 8, 2006 — The seasonally adjusted annual rate¹ of housing starts was 218,100 units in April, down from 251,700 units in March, according to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

"Multiple starts gave back all the gains registered last month," said Bob Dugan, Chief Economist at CMHC's Market Analysis Centre. "In contrast to the volatility in multiple starts, the pace of single starts is slowing consistently as expected."

The seasonally adjusted annual rate of urban starts declined 14.9 per cent to 187,000 units. Urban multiple starts were down 21.5 per cent to 96,500 units comparing April to March, while singles were down 6.4 per cent to 90,500 units.

In April, urban housing starts declined in all regions. Strong declines in multiples pulled down urban starts by 24.7 per cent in Quebec and 20.0 per cent in the Prairies. In Ontario, total urban starts were down 12.2 per cent with single urban starts declining more than multiples. The declines in the Atlantic region and British Columbia were relatively modest at 6.5 per cent and 2.3 per cent respectively.

Rural starts in April were estimated at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 31,100.

In the first four months of 2006, actual urban starts were up 8.3 per cent when compared to the same period a year earlier. Nationally, year-to-date actual urban multiple starts were up 9.3 per cent and singles were up 7.3 per cent compared to the same period in 2005.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) has been Canada's national housing agency for over 60 years. CMHC is committed to helping Canadians access a wide choice of quality, affordable homes, while making vibrant, healthy communities and cities a reality across the country. For more information call 1 (800) 668-2642.

1 All starts figures in this release, other than actual starts, are seasonally adjusted annual rates (SAAR) — that is, monthly figures adjusted to remove normal seasonal variation and multiplied by 12 to reflect annual levels.

Information on this release:

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Atlantic region, urban centres	679	617	9,300	8,700
Quebec, urban centres	5,280	3,983	48,100	36,200
Ontario, urban centres	7,140	5,482	69,900	61,400
Prairie region, urban centres	3,660	3,860	54,100	43,300
British Columbia, urban centres	2,633	3,479	38,300	37,400

Source: CMHC

*Seasonally adjusted annual rates

** Urban centres with a population of 10,000 persons and over.

Detailed data available upon request.