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U.S. Department
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Joint Release

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NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION IN MARCH 2002

BUILDING PERMITS

Privately-owned housing units authorized by building permits in March were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,599,000, according to estimates reported today by the U.S. Commerce Department's Census Bureau. This is 10 (\pm 1) percent below the revised February rate of 1,774,000 and is 2 (\pm 1) percent below the March 2001 estimate of 1,627,000.

Single-family authorizations in March 2002 were at a rate of 1,238,000; this is 10 (\pm 1) percent below the revised February figure of 1,379,000. Authorizations of units in buildings with five units or more were at a rate of 281,000 in March.

HOUSING STARTS

Privately-owned housing starts in March were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,646,000. This is 8 (\pm 9) percent below the revised February estimate of 1,785,000, but is 3 (\pm 6) percent above the March 2001 rate of 1,592,000.

Single-family housing starts in March 2002 were at a rate of 1,303,000; this is 11 (\pm 8) percent below the revised February figure of 1,470,000. The March estimate for units in buildings with five units or more was 292,000.

HOUSING COMPLETIONS

Privately-owned housing completions in March were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,552,000, according to estimates released jointly today by the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This is 7 (\pm 8) percent below the revised February estimate of 1,667,000, but is 5 (\pm 7) percent above the March 2001 rate of 1,478,000.

Single-family housing completions in March 2002 were at a rate of 1,316,000; this is 4 (\pm 9) percent below the revised February figure of 1,376,000. The March rate for units in buildings with five units or more was 220,000.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

In interpreting changes in the statistics in this release, note that month-to-month changes in seasonally adjusted statistics often show movements which may be irregular. It may take 3 months to establish an underlying trend for building permit authorizations, 5 months for total starts, and 6 months for total completions. The statistics in this release are estimated from sample surveys and are subject to sampling variability as well as nonsampling error including bias and variance from response, nonreporting, and undercoverage. Estimated relative standard errors of the most recent data are shown in the tables. Whenever a statement such as "2 (\pm 3) percent above" appears in the text, this indicates the range (-1 to +5 percent) in which the actual percent change is likely to have occurred. All ranges given for percent changes are 90-percent confidence intervals and account only for sampling variability. If a range contains zero, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease; that is, the change is not statistically significant. For any comparison cited without a confidence interval, the change is statistically significant. On average, the preliminary seasonally adjusted estimates of total building permits, housing starts and housing completions are revised about 1 percent. Explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability can be found on our web site listed below.

*New Residential Construction data for April 2002 will be released on
Thursday, May 16, 2002, at 8:30 A.M. EDT.*

Our Internet site is: <http://www.census.gov/mcd>

Table 1. New Privately-Owned Housing Units Authorized in Permit-Issuing Places

[Thousands of units. Detail may not add to total because of rounding]

Period	United States				Northeast		Midwest		South		West	
	Total	In structures with --			Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit
		1 unit	2 to 4 units	5 units or more								
Seasonally adjusted annual rate												
2001: March	1,627	1,209	70	348	146	104	331	253	726	537	424	315
April	1,587	1,218	66	303	149	103	313	239	708	561	417	315
May	1,621	1,205	67	349	145	110	318	247	749	547	409	301
June	1,587	1,225	78	284	142	109	342	253	712	568	391	295
July	1,571	1,211	62	298	161	114	324	246	703	550	383	301
August	1,571	1,210	71	290	152	116	308	243	701	544	410	307
September	1,528	1,164	65	299	141	111	307	232	684	529	396	292
October	1,485	1,140	61	284	153	112	291	225	676	528	365	275
November	1,595	1,211	66	318	154	112	329	248	740	561	372	290
December	1,654	1,247	74	333	165	123	367	263	756	576	366	285
2002: January	1,721	1,335	75	311	170	130	378	317	787	596	386	292
February ^f	1,774	1,379	69	326	194	144	353	278	820	629	407	328
March^p	1,599	1,238	80	281	143	113	318	246	743	571	395	308
Average RSE (%) ¹	1	(Z)	4	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
Not seasonally adjusted												
2000	1,592.3	1,198.1	64.9	329.3	165.1	122.3	323.8	245.4	701.9	529.7	401.5	300.7
2001	1,610.8	1,221.2	68.2	321.3	155.4	113.7	324.0	246.4	725.9	556.8	405.5	304.4
RSE (%)	(Z)	(Z)	2	(Z)	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2001: First 3 months ²	373.6	279.8	14.3	79.5	31.6	21.9	63.7	48.1	178.6	135.5	99.9	74.3
2002: First 3 months ²	374.1	290.4	15.9	67.8	32.8	24.5	64.5	49.8	187.5	145.7	89.3	70.4
RSE (%)	(Z)	1	3	(Z)	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
2001: March	144.7	110.6	6.0	28.1	12.1	8.8	27.9	22.1	66.8	50.8	37.8	28.9
April	143.0	113.6	5.8	23.6	13.3	9.7	30.6	24.6	62.8	50.7	36.3	28.7
May	155.8	121.7	6.2	27.9	14.4	11.6	33.8	26.9	69.3	53.1	38.3	30.0
June	151.1	116.7	7.4	27.0	14.4	10.9	32.4	25.5	64.9	51.8	39.4	28.5
July	138.3	108.1	5.3	24.9	15.0	10.9	29.9	23.5	60.5	47.3	33.0	26.4
August	148.5	113.8	6.6	28.1	14.8	11.3	30.2	23.9	65.0	50.3	38.5	28.3
September	123.0	90.3	5.4	27.3	11.5	8.9	26.7	19.4	53.5	39.4	31.3	22.6
October	133.3	101.3	6.2	25.9	14.1	10.5	29.1	21.9	58.2	45.1	31.9	23.8
November	120.0	87.9	5.2	26.9	12.5	8.7	25.4	18.4	55.8	40.8	26.3	20.0
December	109.8	78.2	5.3	26.3	11.1	7.8	21.0	14.1	51.9	37.2	25.8	19.1
2002: January	115.1	87.9	4.7	22.6	10.1	7.5	18.8	14.0	58.8	45.6	27.4	20.7
February ^f	121.0	94.6	4.6	21.8	11.1	7.9	19.9	15.2	61.6	49.0	28.3	22.5
March^p	137.0	107.4	6.6	23.0	11.5	9.2	26.0	20.5	66.1	50.9	33.4	26.9
Average RSE (%) ¹	1	(Z)	4	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1

^pPreliminary. ^fRevised. RSE Relative standard error.

S Does not meet publication standards because tests for identifiable and stable seasonality do not meet reliability standards.

X Not applicable. Z Less than 0.5 percent.

¹Average RSE for the latest 6-month period.

²Reflects revisions not distributed to months.

Table 2. New Privately-Owned Housing Units Authorized, but Not Started, at End of Period

[Not seasonally adjusted. Thousands of units. Detail may not add to total because of rounding]

Period	United States				Northeast		Midwest		South		West	
	Total	In structures with --			Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit
		1 unit	2 to 4 units	5 units or more								
2001: March	155.0	95.4	4.8	54.8	18.1	10.4	20.7	16.5	77.6	46.0	38.6	22.4
April	149.8	92.3	4.4	53.1	15.3	9.0	24.5	18.1	73.6	43.3	36.4	22.0
May	152.0	93.8	5.5	52.7	17.1	10.4	22.6	17.2	77.2	45.8	35.1	20.4
June	150.9	94.0	6.1	50.8	17.8	10.3	21.2	15.6	75.0	46.3	37.0	21.8
July	137.6	87.6	4.5	45.5	16.7	9.9	21.5	17.3	65.8	40.3	33.5	20.2
August	145.5	92.1	5.8	47.6	15.9	9.5	20.3	16.1	72.5	44.7	36.9	21.9
September	135.2	81.8	5.5	47.9	15.2	7.9	21.9	15.4	65.0	37.7	33.0	20.7
October	127.7	78.0	6.2	43.4	15.5	9.1	19.6	14.3	58.7	33.7	34.0	20.9
November	127.1	78.8	5.1	43.2	13.6	8.1	17.8	12.4	62.9	37.7	32.9	20.6
December	130.5	76.8	6.0	47.7	14.0	7.9	16.9	12.1	67.9	37.5	31.7	19.3
2002: January ^f	137.2	84.9	4.2	48.1	14.2	8.9	19.0	14.0	70.7	41.4	33.4	20.5
February ^f	135.5	83.4	5.8	46.3	16.7	10.2	17.6	12.6	69.9	41.1	31.2	19.5
March^p	140.7	90.9	4.4	45.4	16.3	10.3	18.4	14.8	75.5	46.5	30.6	19.3
Average RSE (%) ¹	4	5	16	8	9	11	9	10	6	6	7	12

^pPreliminary. ^fRevised. RSE Relative Standard Error. Z Less than 500 units or less than 0.5 percent.

¹Average RSE for the latest 6-month period.

Note: These data represent the number of housing units authorized in all months up to and including the last day of the reporting period and not started as of that date without regard to the months of original permit issuance. Cancelled, abandoned, expired, and revoked permits are excluded.

Table 3. New Privately-Owned Housing Units Started

[Thousands of units. Detail may not add to total because of rounding]

Period	United States				Northeast		Midwest		South		West	
	Total	In structures with --			Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit
		1 unit	2 to 4 units	5 units or more								
Seasonally adjusted annual rate												
2001: March	1,592	1,208	(S)	339	155	94	340	270	707	542	390	302
April	1,626	1,295	(S)	289	179	121	299	260	735	598	413	316
May	1,610	1,285	(S)	296	127	99	345	275	719	581	419	330
June	1,634	1,292	(S)	288	139	110	343	274	758	623	394	285
July	1,660	1,290	(S)	329	165	114	321	248	781	620	393	308
August	1,559	1,271	(S)	261	153	120	349	293	676	563	381	295
September	1,585	1,265	(S)	274	140	118	287	255	747	598	411	294
October	1,518	1,225	(S)	260	143	110	316	245	728	596	331	274
November	1,616	1,244	(S)	333	168	103	368	294	706	548	374	299
December	1,602	1,312	(S)	273	144	114	350	282	715	603	393	313
2002: January ^f	1,713	1,346	(S)	301	160	124	356	290	812	629	385	303
February ^f	1,785	1,470	(S)	272	142	123	371	313	837	682	435	352
March^p	1,646	1,303	(S)	292	164	125	345	266	729	581	408	331
Average RSE (%) ¹	3	3	(X)	10	10	10	7	7	5	5	6	7
Not seasonally adjusted												
2000	1,568.7	1,230.9	38.7	299.1	154.5	118.3	317.5	260.4	713.6	555.6	383.1	296.5
2001	1,602.7	1,273.3	36.6	292.8	149.2	110.8	330.4	269.3	732.0	590.3	391.1	303.0
RSE (%)	1	1	9	3	1	1	2	3	1	2	1	1
2001: First 3 months	347.8	273.9	7.8	66.1	26.5	18.5	61.4	48.4	171.3	137.5	88.7	69.5
2002: First 3 months	365.5	291.9	11.6	62.1	29.1	22.2	64.2	49.6	181.2	146.4	91.0	73.6
RSE (%)	3	3	25	10	6	8	8	5	5	5	5	5
2001: March	133.2	104.3	3.4	25.5	11.9	7.3	26.4	21.2	61.1	48.7	33.8	27.2
April	151.3	122.2	3.7	25.4	15.7	10.6	28.6	25.1	68.3	56.3	38.7	30.2
May	154.0	125.8	2.5	25.6	12.2	9.7	35.6	29.6	66.4	54.5	39.8	32.1
June	155.2	125.8	4.6	24.8	13.4	10.9	35.4	29.4	70.6	59.0	35.8	26.5
July	154.6	120.5	3.8	30.3	15.9	11.2	30.1	23.4	71.0	56.2	37.6	29.8
August	141.5	115.4	2.4	23.6	15.3	12.3	32.8	27.7	59.3	49.1	34.0	26.2
September	133.1	105.2	4.0	23.9	12.5	10.6	25.2	22.4	61.0	48.1	34.4	24.2
October	139.8	110.3	3.4	26.1	13.5	10.3	31.9	24.8	65.5	52.3	28.8	23.1
November	121.0	90.6	3.2	27.2	14.1	8.8	28.6	22.5	50.8	37.9	27.5	21.4
December	104.6	83.6	1.2	19.7	10.1	7.9	21.0	16.1	47.6	39.5	25.8	20.1
2002: January ^f	110.4	84.7	4.7	21.1	8.9	6.4	18.1	13.4	57.0	44.2	26.4	20.6
February ^f	120.0	98.8	2.9	18.3	7.7	6.4	20.6	16.8	61.9	51.5	29.8	24.2
March^p	135.2	108.4	4.0	22.8	12.5	9.5	25.6	19.4	62.3	50.7	34.8	28.8
Average RSE (%) ¹	3	3	24	10	10	10	7	7	5	5	6	7

^fPreliminary. ^rRevised. RSE Relative standard error.

S Does not meet publication standards because tests for identifiable and stable seasonality do not meet reliability standards.

X Not applicable. Z Less than 0.5 percent.

¹Average RSE for the latest 6-month period.

Table 4. New Privately-Owned Housing Units Under Construction at End of Period

[Thousands of units. Detail may not add to total because of rounding]

Period	United States				Northeast		Midwest		South		West	
	Total	In structures with --			Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit
		1 unit	2 to 4 units	5 units or more								
Seasonally adjusted												
2001: March	1,002	676	(S)	293	114	76	199	147	429	285	260	168
April	1,006	682	(S)	291	116	77	197	147	431	290	262	168
May	1,016	688	(S)	299	115	75	202	149	432	292	267	172
June	1,012	688	(S)	294	112	73	206	150	428	295	266	170
July	1,019	693	(S)	296	116	74	200	145	433	300	270	174
August	1,009	691	(S)	289	118	75	200	149	425	297	266	170
September	1,015	691	(S)	294	120	77	200	149	425	295	270	170
October	1,009	682	(S)	294	119	75	199	145	425	294	266	168
November	1,008	680	(S)	297	120	74	200	146	425	294	263	166
December	998	673	(S)	296	118	72	202	149	416	287	262	165
2002: January ^f	1,005	674	(S)	300	115	71	206	150	422	288	262	165
February ^f	1,013	682	(S)	299	114	71	206	151	428	292	265	168
March^p	1,012	677	(S)	301	115	71	205	148	430	292	262	166
Average RSE (%) ¹	2	2	(X)	3	3	5	5	6	2	3	3	4
Not seasonally adjusted												
2001: March	967.0	644.0	32.3	290.7	109.8	72.1	187.2	135.4	417.8	275.7	252.1	160.7
April	996.2	669.4	33.2	293.5	114.3	74.9	191.2	140.8	431.0	288.7	259.7	165.1
May	1,027.6	696.5	29.8	301.4	115.1	75.1	203.4	149.6	440.1	298.8	269.0	172.9
June	1,038.3	710.9	30.0	297.4	113.8	74.0	211.5	155.3	440.6	306.4	272.4	175.3
July	1,056.3	725.7	30.3	300.2	118.3	75.6	209.7	153.7	448.2	313.8	280.0	182.5
August	1,046.2	729.5	28.9	287.8	120.6	77.9	210.9	160.1	437.6	310.5	276.9	181.1
September	1,043.3	721.6	29.8	291.9	122.4	79.3	208.3	157.7	434.0	305.0	278.6	179.6
October	1,035.6	706.6	33.6	295.4	122.2	77.9	207.3	152.9	433.7	301.9	272.4	173.9
November	1,018.4	686.5	31.5	300.4	122.6	76.2	204.1	149.8	426.7	293.8	265.0	166.7
December	959.4	638.3	28.4	292.6	116.1	70.9	195.9	143.0	396.5	269.1	250.9	155.3
2002: January ^f	957.3	631.3	30.1	295.9	111.4	68.4	194.2	139.3	401.3	268.7	250.4	154.9
February ^f	960.2	635.4	31.2	293.6	108.5	66.5	191.0	137.4	408.8	275.0	251.9	156.4
March^p	974.7	643.1	33.4	298.2	110.3	67.1	192.0	135.7	417.9	281.2	254.5	159.2
Average RSE (%) ¹	2	2	10	3	3	5	5	6	2	3	3	4

^pPreliminary. ^fRevised. RSE Relative standard error.

S Does not meet publication standards because tests for identifiable and stable seasonality do not meet reliability standards.

X Not applicable. Z Less than 500 units or less than 0.5 percent.

¹Average RSE for the latest 6-month period.

Table 5. New Privately-Owned Housing Units Completed

[Thousands of units. Detail may not add to total because of rounding]

Period	United States				Northeast		Midwest		South		West	
	Total	In structures with --			Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit	Total	1 unit
		1 unit	2 to 4 units	5 units or more								
Seasonally adjusted annual rate												
2001: March	1,478	1,207	(S)	238	130	109	289	254	690	561	369	283
April	1,569	1,232	(S)	308	147	106	324	255	703	551	395	320
May	1,499	1,225	(S)	223	136	114	289	252	699	557	375	302
June	1,643	1,275	(S)	322	166	136	317	267	779	585	381	287
July	1,583	1,269	(S)	280	126	112	367	299	735	583	355	275
August	1,620	1,276	(S)	314	139	113	315	239	760	600	406	324
September	1,543	1,258	(S)	254	121	95	305	263	742	606	375	294
October	1,577	1,317	(S)	234	162	121	306	275	722	597	387	324
November	1,574	1,262	(S)	279	144	115	340	268	666	544	424	335
December	1,703	1,361	(S)	300	175	130	313	246	804	655	411	330
2002: January ^r	1,594	1,290	(S)	269	183	123	281	253	745	616	385	298
February ^r	1,667	1,376	(S)	265	139	120	382	307	755	623	391	326
March^p	1,552	1,316	(S)	220	139	122	339	303	652	555	422	336
Average RSE (%) ¹	4	4	(X)	11	11	10	9	9	5	5	7	8
Not seasonally adjusted												
2000	1,573.7	1,241.8	27.3	304.7	146.1	120.4	334.4	268.9	729.3	565.9	363.9	286.5
2001	1,570.8	1,255.9	33.9	281.0	144.8	113.7	316.4	261.1	726.3	578.2	383.3	302.9
RSE (%)	1	1	11	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2
2001: First 3 months	320.5	253.8	5.8	60.9	29.6	22.1	60.4	50.1	152.3	121.1	78.1	60.4
2002: First 3 months	346.9	287.6	5.4	53.9	32.3	25.5	66.7	56.8	160.1	134.6	87.9	70.8
RSE (%)	3	3	29	10	10	9	8	8	5	5	7	7
2001: March	114.4	93.4	2.5	18.4	9.6	7.9	20.3	17.6	55.8	45.8	28.7	22.1
April	121.5	95.4	2.3	23.9	10.9	7.8	24.6	19.2	54.9	43.1	31.1	25.3
May	122.0	99.6	4.1	18.2	11.0	9.3	23.4	20.3	56.8	45.2	30.7	24.8
June	143.9	110.8	4.1	29.0	14.6	11.9	28.0	23.5	68.2	50.7	33.1	24.6
July	134.7	105.8	3.1	25.8	10.7	9.5	31.5	25.2	62.6	48.6	29.9	22.5
August	148.5	113.0	3.1	32.3	12.4	9.7	29.2	21.3	69.5	53.0	37.4	28.9
September	137.2	113.0	2.6	21.6	11.1	8.9	28.6	25.0	64.8	53.2	32.7	25.8
October	143.6	121.2	2.3	20.1	14.5	11.0	29.8	27.2	64.5	53.7	34.7	29.3
November	136.7	112.3	2.6	21.8	12.8	10.5	31.6	26.0	56.0	46.5	36.3	29.4
December	162.3	131.1	3.9	27.3	17.1	13.0	29.3	23.2	76.7	63.1	39.2	31.8
2002: January ^r	112.3	91.0	2.4	18.8	12.9	8.7	18.9	16.9	53.2	44.2	27.2	21.2
February ^r	115.2	95.2	1.8	18.2	9.4	8.1	23.7	18.6	54.6	45.5	27.6	23.1
March^p	119.5	101.4	1.2	16.9	10.0	8.7	24.1	21.3	52.3	44.9	33.1	26.5
Average RSE (%) ¹	4	4	24	11	11	10	9	9	5	5	7	8

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. RSE Relative standard error.

S Does not meet publication standards because tests for identifiable and stable seasonality do not meet reliability standards.

X Not applicable. Z Less than 0.5 percent.

¹Average RSE for the latest 6-month period.