



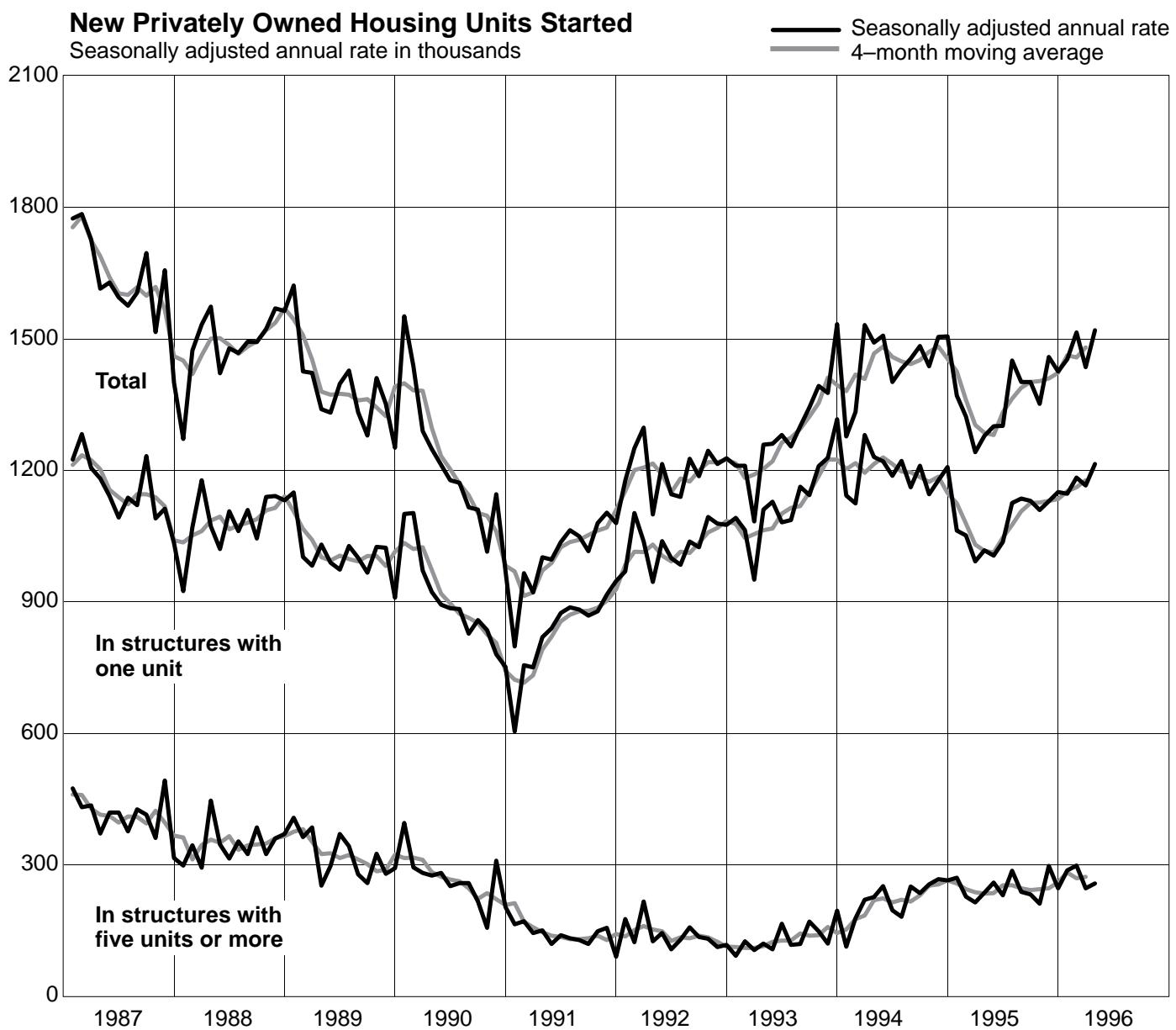
Housing Starts

April 1996

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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Unadjusted statistics on new mobile home placements for 1995 and seasonally adjusted statistics for 1993 through 1995 have been revised (see table 5 and supplement).



Note: Total includes units started in structures with two to four units.

Questions regarding these data may be directed to Erica Filipek, Construction Starts Branch, Telephone 301-457-4703.

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HOUSING STARTS AND BUILDING PERMITS

Privately owned housing starts in April were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,519,000. This is 6 (± 7) percent above the revised March rate of 1,435,000 and 19 (± 7) percent above the April 1995 figure of 1,278,000.

Single-family housing starts in April 1996 were at a rate of 1,214,000; this is 4 (± 6) percent above the March figure of 1,165,000. The April rate for units in buildings with five units or more was 257,000. The April rate for units in buildings with two to four units was 48,000.

During the first 4 months of this year, 449,100 housing units were started compared with 386,800 units for the same period in 1995. This is an increase of 16 (± 3) percent.

New privately owned housing construction was authorized in April in the 19,000 permit-issuing places at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,461,000 units; this is 3 (± 2) percent above the revised March rate of 1,415,000 and 18 (± 2) percent above the April 1995 rate of 1,243,000.

Single-family authorizations in April 1996 were at a rate of 1,117,000; this is 2 (± 2) percent above the March figure of 1,092,000. Authorizations of units in buildings with five units or more were at a rate of 273,000. The April rate of permit-authorized units in buildings with two to four units was 71,000.

During the first 4 months of this year, 442,000 housing units were authorized by permits in the 19,000 places compared with 383,700 units for the same period in 1995. This is an increase of 15 (± 1) percent.

In interpreting changes in housing starts and building permits, note that month-to-month changes in seasonally adjusted statistics often show movements which may be irregular. It may take 4 months to establish an underlying trend for total starts and 3 months for building permit authorizations.

The statistics in this report 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 average relative standard errors of preliminary data are shown in the tables. Whenever a statement such as "2 (± 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 are 90-percent confidence intervals and account for only 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. Explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability appear in the appendix to the December 1995/January 1996 Current Construction Reports, C20/96-1. On average, the preliminary seasonally adjusted estimates of total housing starts and building permits are revised about ± 1 percent.

Housing starts and building permits data do not include mobile home units. Mobile home statistics are shown in table 5.

HISTORICAL DATA

Historical data on housing starts and residential permit authorizations are available from Construction Starts Branch, Manufacturing and Construction Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233. Telephone 301-457-4703.

A list of tables and special supplements is shown below:

Title	C20 issues				
New privately owned housing units started, by purpose of construction (quarterly and annual data).....	96-4	96-1	95-10	95-7	95-4
Total time from start of construction to completion of private residential buildings (annual data)	96-3	95-3	94-3	93-3	92-3
Total time from authorization of construction to start for private residential buildings (annual data)	96-3	95-3	94-3	93-3	92-3
New privately owned housing units, by intended use and design at time of start (annual data)	96-2	95-2	94-2	93-2	92-2
New mobile homes (quarterly and annual data).....	96-4	96-1	95-9	95-6	95-5

Table 6. Seasonal Indexes Used to Adjust Housing Units Started

Period	United States implicit index ¹	In structures with—						All units			
		1 unit				2 to 4 units	5 units or more	North-east	Midwest	South	West
		North-east	Midwest	South	West						
1996											
January	74.9	56.2	52.7	80.3	81.4	66.7	86.2	60.0	52.9	84.5	82.7
February ^a	76.0	49.7	51.5	88.9	85.5	74.2	79.2	57.0	52.8	87.7	84.0
March ^b	96.5	85.7	91.1	106.5	100.9	99.8	81.0	88.0	90.6	105.8	98.6
April ^p	116.3	117.5	119.7	118.2	111.9	124.2	111.9	117.6	118.7	119.2	113.0

^aPreliminary. ^bRevised.¹The implicit seasonal index is the ratio of the unadjusted number of housing units started in the United States to the seasonally adjusted national total of housing units started. It provides an indication of the overall seasonality for the particular month.

Note: These seasonal indexes include trading-day adjustment factors.

Table 7. Seasonal Indexes Used to Adjust Housing Units Authorized in Permit-Issuing Places

Period	United States implicit index ¹	In structures with—						All units			
		1 unit				2 to 4 units	5 units or more	North-east	Midwest	South	West
		North-east	Midwest	South	West						
1996											
January	76.3	57.9	51.2	88.9	77.6	73.6	83.0	62.1	54.9	90.4	76.8
February	80.6	62.4	64.4	92.9	85.1	79.1	77.1	61.1	61.6	90.8	81.9
March ^b	101.6	92.1	100.2	108.5	106.2	101.5	89.8	93.7	98.1	107.3	103.2
April ^p	114.9	117.0	127.2	114.8	114.5	115.9	103.1	115.9	119.2	114.3	110.9

^aPreliminary. ^bRevised.¹The implicit seasonal index is the ratio of the unadjusted number of housing units authorized by building permits in the United States to the seasonally adjusted national total of housing units authorized. It provides an indication of the overall seasonality for the particular month.

Note: These seasonal indexes include trading-day adjustment factors.

Table 8. Seasonal Indexes Used to Adjust New Mobile Home Placements, Dealers' Inventories, and Manufacturers' Shipments

Period	New mobile homes placed for residential use					New mobile homes on dealer lots at end of period					Mobile home shipments
	United States implicit index ¹	North-east	Midwest	South	West	United States implicit index ¹	North-east	Midwest	South	West	
1995											
October ^a	112.0	126.0	126.0	106.6	116.3	95.2	97.2	93.5	96.8	91.3	111.3
November ^b	98.8	109.5	109.5	95.9	97.4	98.0	95.9	91.4	100.1	95.5	99.5
December ^b	85.2	88.5	88.5	83.2	90.3	99.0	92.3	90.8	101.9	96.1	82.2
1996											
January ^p	69.8 (NA) (NA)	48.7 (NA) (NA)	48.7 (NA) (NA)	77.1 (NA) (NA)	69.1 (NA) (NA)	101.8 (NA) (NA)	93.5 (NA) (NA)	96.7 (NA) (NA)	104.4 (NA) (NA)	98.6 (NA) (NA)	92.5 95.5 99.0
February											
March											

NA Not available. ^aPreliminary (does not apply to shipments). ^bRevised (does not apply to shipments).¹The implicit seasonal index is the ratio of the unadjusted United States estimate to the seasonally adjusted United States estimate. It provides an indication of the overall seasonality for the particular month.

Note: These seasonal indexes include trading-day adjustment factors.

Supplement.

Survey of New Mobile Home Placements

During the fourth quarter of 1995, an estimated 75,200 new mobile homes were placed for residential use. Of these, 36,400 were single-wide homes and 37,600 were double-wides. The average sales price of all homes placed in the fourth quarter was \$38,400. The average price of a single-wide home was \$28,500 compared with \$47,200 for double-wides. Average prices of all homes placed in the fourth quarter of 1995 ranged from \$36,000 in the South to \$48,200 in the West. The number of homes on dealer lots at the end of December 1995 was 91,000.

In this supplement, quarterly and annual data are provided for mobile homes placed, average sales prices, and dealers' inventories. These are shown for the United States and the four Census regions. The survey is conducted by the Bureau of the Census and sponsored by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The methodology for collecting information on new mobile homes for 1974 through 1979 involved contacting a sample of mobile home dealers each month within 137 geographic areas or primary sampling units. The dealers were requested to provide data on the number of mobile homes received from manufacturers, the number placed on a site for residential use, and the number held in inventory.

The methodology used after 1979 involves a monthly sample of new mobile homes shipped by manufacturers. The dealer to whom the sampled unit was shipped is contacted by telephone and asked about the status of the unit. This is done each month until that unit is reported as placed.

DEFINITIONS

A mobile home is defined as a movable dwelling, 8 feet or more wide and 40 feet or more long, designed to be towed on its own chassis, with transportation gear integral to the unit when it leaves the factory, and without need of a permanent foundation. These mobile homes include multi-wides, which are counted as single units, and expandable mobile homes. Excluded are travel trailers, motor homes, and modular housing.

Beginning in 1980, the average sales prices are computed from data for mobile homes sold at or before the time they are placed on a site. Prices (values) of mobile homes leased or sold after placement are not collected. The average sales price computation for mobile homes placed prior to 1980 included not only the sales price of those sold, but also the intended sales price of those for sale and the value of leased mobile homes.

RELATED STATISTICS

The series of shipments of mobile homes shown in table 5 of this report are estimates of new mobile homes shipped by manufacturers each month. These estimates differ from mobile home placements (shown in this supplement and in table 5) in that shipments to dealers may or may not be placed in the same month as they are shipped.

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

The estimates in this supplement are based on a sample survey and may differ from the results that would have been obtained from a complete census using the same schedules and procedures. An estimate based on a sample survey is subject to both sampling error and nonsampling error. The accuracy of a survey result is determined by the joint effects of these errors. Sampling error reflects the fact that only a particular sample was surveyed rather than the entire population. Nonsampling errors can be attributed to many sources: inability to obtain information about all cases in the sample, definitional difficulties, differences in interpretation of questions, inability or unwillingness of respondents to provide correct information, and errors made in processing the data. These nonsampling errors also occur in complete censuses. Although no direct measurements of the biases have been obtained, it is believed that most of the important response and operational errors were detected in the course of reviewing the data for reasonableness and consistency. As derived for this report, the estimated relative standard errors include part of the effect of nonsampling errors, but do not measure any systematic biases in the data.

Each sample selected for the Survey of New Mobile Home Placements is one of a large number of similar probability samples that, by chance, might have been selected under the same specifications. Estimates derived from the different samples would differ from each other. The standard error, or sampling error, of a survey estimate is a measure of the precision with which an estimate from a particular sample approximates the average from all possible samples. Estimates of the standard errors for mobile home placements, average sales prices, and dealers' inventories have been computed from the sample data. They are presented in the tables in the form of average relative standard errors. The relative standard error equals the standard error divided by the estimated value to which it refers. For a more detailed description of sampling variability, see the appendix in the December 1995/January 1996 Current Construction Reports, C20/96-1.

