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Joint Release

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NEW RESIDENTIAL SALES IN DECEMBER 2001

Sales of new one-family houses in December 2001 were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 946,000, according to estimates released jointly today by the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This is 6 (± 11) percent above the revised November rate of 895,000, but is 5 (± 13) percent below the December 2000 estimate of 1,001,000.

The median sales price of new houses sold in December 2001 was \$170,200; the average sales price was \$225,400. At the end of December, the seasonally adjusted estimate of new houses for sale was 308,000. This represents a supply of 3.9 months at the current sales rate.

In 2001, there were 900,000 houses sold compared with 877,000 houses sold during 2000. This is an increase of 3 (± 3) percent.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

These statistics are estimated from sample surveys. They 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 the preliminary data are shown in the tables. Whenever a statement such as "3 (± 4) percent above" appears in the text, this indicates the range (from -1 percent to +7 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. Changes in seasonally adjusted statistics often show irregular movement. It takes 4 months to establish a trend for new houses sold. Preliminary new home sales figures are subject to revision due to the survey methodology and definitions used. The survey is primarily based on a sample of houses selected from building permits. Since a "sale" is defined as a deposit taken or sales agreement signed, this can occur prior to a permit being issued. An estimate of these prior sales is included in the sales figure. On average, the preliminary seasonally adjusted estimate of total sales is revised ± 3 percent. Changes in sales price data reflect changes in the distribution of houses by region, size, etc., as well as changes in the prices of houses with identical characteristics. Explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability can be found on our web site listed below.

*New Residential Sales data for January 2002 will be released on
Wednesday, February 27, 2002, at 10:00 A.M. EST.*

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

Table 1. New Houses Sold and For Sale

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

Period	Sold during period ¹					For sale at end of period					Months' supply ²	Median sales price (\$)	Average sales price (\$)	
	United States	North-east	Mid-west	South	West	United States	North-east	Mid-west	South	West				
Seasonally adjusted														
2000: December	1,001	67	174	464	296	297						3.6		
2001: January	938	56	173	438	271	295						3.8		
February	959	74	168	435	282	295						3.7		
March	953	77	184	451	241	289						3.7		
April	899	71	163	424	241	293						3.9		
May	882	55	152	439	236	296						4.1		
June	889	61	170	423	235	301						4.2		
July	877	70	155	423	229	307						4.2		
August	871	64	150	426	231	309						4.3		
September ^f	854	52	162	429	211	310						4.4		
October ^f	851	66	144	430	211	308						4.5		
November ^f	895	71	166	450	208	308						4.2		
December^p	946	70	150	445	281	308						3.9		
Average RSE (%) ³	6	17	15	9	11	3						6		
Not seasonally adjusted														
2000:	877	71	155	406	244	301	28	65	146	62	(X)	169,000	207,000	
2001: ^p	900	66	161	433	239	312	27	73	143	69	(X)	174,100	211,900	
RSE (%)	2	7	6	4	3	4	12	8	5	6	(X)	2	2	
2000: December	65	5	10	31	19	301	28	65	146	62	4.6	162,000	208,100	
2001: January	72	4	11	35	22	298	28	64	145	61	4.2	171,300	209,000	
February	85	7	14	40	25	291	27	63	143	59	3.4	169,100	211,000	
March	94	7	19	43	24	286	25	61	139	61	3.1	166,300	210,200	
April	84	7	16	38	23	288	23	60	142	62	3.4	175,200	205,500	
May	80	5	14	40	21	293	24	60	143	65	3.7	175,300	211,400	
June	79	5	16	37	21	302	24	63	147	68	3.8	179,400	211,700	
July	76	6	13	37	20	306	24	63	148	70	4.0	175,000	209,300	
August	74	6	13	36	20	310	25	67	149	69	4.2	173,700	207,500	
September ^f	66	4	12	33	16	310	26	68	146	70	4.7	166,400	203,300	
October ^f	65	5	11	32	16	314	27	70	146	71	4.9	170,900	207,600	
November ^f	64	5	12	32	14	313	27	71	144	71	4.9	162,800	203,300	
December^p	62	5	9	30	18	312	27	73	143	69	5.0	170,200	225,400	
Average RSE (%) ³	6	17	15	9	11	3	12	8	5	6	6	4	4	

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. RSE Relative standard error. X Not applicable. Z Less than 0.5 percent.

¹Annual rates.

²Ratio of houses for sale to houses sold.

³Average RSE for the latest 6-month period.

Note: The sales price includes the land.

Table 2. New Houses Sold, by Sales Price

[Thousands of houses. Components may not add to total because of rounding. Percents computed from unrounded figures]

Period	Total	Under	\$100,000 to	\$125,000 to	\$150,000 to	\$200,000 to	\$250,000 to	\$300,000
		\$100,000	\$124,999	\$149,999	\$199,999	\$249,999	\$299,999	and over
Number of houses¹								
2000:	877	88	112	150	200	121	73	132
2001: ^P	900	76	106	143	218	132	85	138
RSE (%)	2	14	6	5	5	5	7	6
2000: December	65	7	8	12	14	9	4	10
2001: January	72	6	7	12	19	11	7	9
February	85	8	11	14	19	13	7	13
March	94	6	13	16	21	14	9	14
April	84	7	9	13	23	12	8	12
May	80	8	8	12	21	12	7	11
June	79	6	10	13	19	12	7	13
July	76	8	9	12	18	10	8	11
August	74	7	8	11	19	11	8	10
September ^f	66	7	6	12	16	10	5	10
October ^f	65	6	8	11	15	10	6	9
November ^f	64	6	11	11	15	6	6	9
December^P	62	5	9	11	11	8	6	12
Average RSE (%) ²	6	25	16	13	13	14	19	13
Percent distribution								
2000:	100	12	14	18	24	13	7	13
2001: ^P	100	10	13	17	23	14	8	15
2000: December	100	11	12	19	22	14	7	16
2001: January	100	8	10	17	27	16	9	13
February	100	9	13	16	23	15	8	15
March	100	7	14	17	23	15	9	15
April	100	9	11	16	27	14	9	14
May	100	10	9	15	27	16	9	14
June	100	7	12	17	24	15	9	16
July	100	10	11	15	24	14	11	15
August	100	9	11	15	26	15	10	14
September ^f	100	11	10	18	25	15	8	14
October ^f	100	9	12	17	23	15	9	14
November ^f	100	9	17	17	23	10	10	14
December^P	100	9	15	18	18	12	9	20

^PPreliminary. ^RRevised. RSE Relative standard error. X Not applicable. Z Less than 0.5 percent.

¹Houses for which sales price was not reported have been distributed proportionally to those for which sales price was reported.

²Average RSE for the latest 6-month period.

Note: The sales price includes the land.

Table 3. New Houses Sold and For Sale by Stage of Construction and Median Number of Months on Sales Market

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

Period	Sold during period				For sale at end of period				Median months for sale ¹
	Total	Not started	Under construction	Completed	Total	Not started	Under construction	Completed	
2000:	877	319	331	227	301	39	171	91	4.2
2001: ^p	900	327	338	235	312	43	191	78	4.4
RSE (%)	2	3	4	6	4	7	4	6	5
2000: December	65	23	21	21	301	39	171	91	4.2
2001: January	72	28	24	20	298	40	174	85	4.7
February	85	37	30	19	291	40	170	81	4.8
March	94	37	33	24	286	44	165	76	5.0
April	84	34	30	19	288	39	174	75	5.3
May	80	29	32	19	293	43	174	76	5.2
June	79	29	31	19	302	47	182	74	5.0
July	76	25	30	21	306	43	191	73	4.6
August	74	25	30	19	310	48	188	74	4.4
September ^f	66	23	25	18	310	40	191	78	4.0
October ^f	65	19	26	19	314	41	194	79	3.8
November ^f	64	20	24	20	313	41	194	79	4.1
December^p	62	21	23	18	312	43	191	78	4.4
Average RSE (%) ²	6	6	7	9	3	6	4	6	7

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. RSE Relative standard error. Z Less than 0.5 percent.

¹Median number of months for sale since completion.

²Average RSE for the latest 6-month period.