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Taxable Retail Sales Decline 2.4 Percent in Second Quarter 2008

OLYMPIA, Wash., Oct. 09, 2008 — Taxable retail sales declined 2.4 percent to \$29.1 billion during the second quarter of 2008, the Washington State Department of Revenue reported today.

Despite the decline over second quarter 2007, sales still were 5.4 percent higher than the \$27.6 billion in sales reported for the second quarter of 2006.

Retail trade was down 3.5 percent to \$12.4 billion. Retail trade is a subset of all taxable retail sales that excludes construction, services and other non-retail businesses. Retail trade is a better measure of consumer purchases.

Among counties, travel destinations appeared to be hardest hit, with San Juan and Island counties experiencing 15.6 percent and 13.7 percent declines in retail trade, respectively. Skagit retail sales dropped 10.9 percent.

Some Eastern Washington counties did well. Ferry County retail trade increased 15 percent, while Garfield was up 13.7 percent, and Lincoln rose 12.8 percent.

Among retailers, the biggest decline was experienced by sellers of big-ticket items. Sales by RV, boat and motorcycle dealers dropped 21.7 percent, followed by a 13.2 percent decline in sales by new and used auto dealers. Furniture and home furnishing sales were down 9.9 percent, although electronics and appliances, including TV sales, were up 6.26 percent.

Results for the largest industries:



	Taxable retail sales	% change
Construction	\$5.87 billion	-3.24%
Motor Vehicles and Parts	\$2.93 billion	-13.55%
Accommodations and food services	\$2.88 billion	3.31%
General merchandise stores	\$2.30 billion	0.89%
Miscellaneous retail stores	\$1.48 billion	3.55%
Building materials, garden equipment and supplies	\$1.45 billion	-8.79%

Results for the most populace counties:

	Taxable retail sales	% change	Retail trade	% change
King	\$11.59 billion	-1.36%	\$4.38 billion	-3.38%
Pierce	\$3.00 billion	-5.50%	\$1.43 billion	-5.57%
Snohomish	\$2.79 billion	-4.66%	\$1.34 billion	-6.74%
Spokane	\$1.90 billion	-2.23%	\$918.0 million	-1.53%
Clark	\$1.18 billion	-3.44%	\$500.2 million	-5.56%

Results for cities with the most sales:

	Taxable retail sales	% change	Retail trade	% change
Seattle	\$4.35 billion	3.34%	\$1.33 billion	-0.5%
Bellevue	\$1.41 billion	-5.53%	\$626.5 million	-7.33%
Tacoma	\$1.09 billion	-7.19%	\$512.7 million	-5.71%
Spokane	\$1.00 billion	-0.32%	\$477.2 million	2.68%
Vancouver	\$679.0 million	1.01%	\$276.1 million	-5.16%

Additional results for all counties and selected cities, including breakdowns of sales by industry sector, are available online at

<http://www.dor.wa.gov/Content/AboutUs/StatisticsAndReports/2008/qbr208/default.aspx>.

Breakdowns of taxable retail sales and retail trade by county and city are available at <http://dor.wa.gov/docs/pubs/news/2008/Q2-08TotalTRSvsRetailingTRSforcountiesandcities.xls>. A breakdown of statewide results by industry is available at

http://dor.wa.gov/docs/pubs/news/2008/TRS_STATEWIDE_NAICS2Q08.xls.

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