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Continued growth in state's taxable retail sales – 7.8 percent increase

OLYMPIA – Feb. 10, 2016 – The state's taxable retail sales made in the third quarter of 2015 (July 1 – Sept. 30) reached \$35.8 billion, a 7.8 percent increase over the same quarter in 2014. Figures for the retail trade industry, which is a subset of all taxable retail sales made in the state, show a 5.8 percent increase over the same time period last year. The retail trade comprised \$15.4 billion of the state's total taxable retail sales.

The data comes from reports released by the Washington State Department of Revenue (Revenue) each quarter. The reports compare the same quarter year-over-year to equalize any seasonal effects of consumer purchasing behavior.

Revenue categorizes the state's taxable retail sales using the North American Industry Classification System, the same method federal statistical agencies use to classify businesses for the purpose of analyzing data related to the economy.

Third Quarter 2015 snapshot

- Sales of vehicles and auto parts increased 10.1 percent to \$3.98 billion
- Purchases in building materials and gardening stores rose 7.27 percent to \$1.56 billion
- General merchandise stores reported \$2.82 billion in taxable sales, up 2.49 percent
- Figures from accommodations, restaurants and bars statewide increased 8.02 percent to \$4.4 billion

Counties: Second quarter 2015 results for most populous counties

	Taxable retail sales	Percent change	Retail trade	Percent change
King	\$14.47 billion	10.58	\$5.30 billion	5.67
Pierce	\$3.64 billion	9.28	\$1.82 billion	8.18
Snohomish	\$3.31 billion	7.93	\$1.72 billion	3.69
Spokane	2.25 billion	4.12	\$1.11 billion	6.66
Clark	\$1.59 billion	13.42	\$697 million	10.10

Thurston	\$1.18 billion	8.85	\$588 million	5.61
Kitsap	\$1.01 billion	9.02	\$524 million	8.87
Yakima	\$943 million	1.29	\$435 million	5.97
Whatcom	\$994 million	5.85	\$431 million	4.87
Skagit	\$687 million	7.74	\$367 million	4.97

Cities: Third quarter 2015 results for cities with the most sales

	Taxable retail sales	Percent change	Retail trade	Percent change
Seattle	\$5.85 billion	10.17	\$1.68 billion	4.50
Bellevue	\$1.75 billion	14.42	\$736 million	4.81
Tacoma	\$1.21 billion	9.33	\$592 million	6.50
Spokane	\$1.18 billion	3.92	\$543 million	5.69
Vancouver	\$911 million	15.42	\$406 million	10.97

Revenue provides additional detail about taxable retail sales by city, county and industry. These reports for the third quarter of 2015 are posted here:

http://dor.wa.gov/Content/AboutUs/StatisticsAndReports/stats_lrs2015.aspx.

Fourth quarter 2015 data should be available in late April 2016.

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About Revenue

The Department of Revenue is Washington state's primary tax administration agency, nationally recognized for innovation and service quality. Revenue collected \$20.8 billion in tax revenues in Fiscal Year 2015. These funds support education, social services, health care, corrections, public safety, natural resources conservation and other public services.