

## Family incomes are highest in Wood Buffalo, Alberta

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OTTAWA -- If you thought Ottawa was "fat cat" city, consider the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

Statistics Canada reported Tuesday that "couple families" in Ottawa-Gatineau had the highest median total family income among census metropolitan areas in 2005 at \$86,100, up 2.6 per cent from 2004. The median is the point where half of the families' incomes are higher and half are lower.

At the same time, the median total income for couple families in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo in northern Alberta remained highest among "census agglomerations" at \$130,100, up six per cent from 2004, the agency said. The area includes Fort McMurray and the province's oilsands development. The census agglomeration of Yellowknife ranked second at \$121,000, followed by Labrador City at \$95,700, the report showed.

Winnipeg ranked 18th for couple families out of the 27 cities surveyed with a median income of \$68,900, a 1.4 per cent increase from 2004. It was also 18th for lone-parent families with a median income of \$30,200, a drop of 0.8 per cent.

Common law

Statistics Canada defines a couple family as a couple living together, married or common law, and any children living at the same address. A census metropolitan area or a census agglomeration is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centered on a large urban area.

After Ottawa-Gatineau, couple families in Oshawa, which have led census metropolitan areas for the past two years, followed with a median of \$85,400, the agency said. Nationally, the median total income for couple families rose 2.1 per cent to \$67,600 in 2005, after adjusting for inflation, it added.

The largest percentage increases in the median total income for couple families were in Edmonton (4.6 per cent), Calgary (4.2 per cent) and Greater Sudbury (3.8 per cent).

Among lone-parent families, those in the census metropolitan area of Quebec had the highest median total family income at \$37,200, up 5.2 per cent over 2004, followed by Ottawa-Gatineau at \$36,100, and Calgary at \$36,000, Statistics Canada said. The national

median total income for lone-parent families was \$30,000, relatively unchanged from 2004, it added.

-- *CanWest News Service*