Such large firms may build from 50 to 300 houses or more at one time, on a large tract of land they have purchased and sub-divided into building lots. In the larger projects, provision will be made for schools, churches, shops, paved streets, sidewalks, underground utility services, parks and playgrounds.

Formerly construction work virtually stopped during the winter months when below-zero temperatures prevented building with the usual techniques. In recent years the construction industry and the Federal Government have made efforts to solve this problem and thus permit builders to offer year-round work to their employees. Research has resulted in improved building techniques; government-sponsored incentive payments have encouraged builders to do more winter construction. Special winter-building techniques, such as using heated, pre-mixed concrete and enclosing the construction site in temporary plastic tents which can be heated, are now common.

Since Canada is one of the world's largest producers of wood and wood products, it follows that a great deal of wood is used in Canadian house-building. It is estimated that three out of four new houses (single-detached, semi-detached, duplex and row) are of wood-frame construction. In wood-frame construction the basic frame or skeleton of the house is of lumber but the exterior walls, which are added later, may be of stone, artificial stone, brick, stucco, metal or wood. One out of four of the new homes are made of solid brick, stone or cement block.

About three out of four single-detached houses now being built in Canada are bungalows; 17 per cent are split-level houses; 7 per cent are two-storey houses.

Prefabrication as a method of house-building is attracting increasing attention because of the savings which can be made through a centralized operation and assembly-line methods. Housing components such as roof trusses, exterior walls, interior partitions and kitchen units are made at a central factory and then trucked to the building site, where a basement has been excavated and a foundation of poured concrete or concrete blocks completed. Using prefabricated components two men can assemble a three- or four-bedroom house in five working days. On large projects, with crews of specialists, this building time can be reduced.

Continuing research and a changing and expanding consumer demand results in new building materials being introduced on the market in a steady stream.

Plywood has now replaced lumber in many interior and exterior uses. Pre-painted plywood exterior siding is a recent innovation. Pre-painted aluminum, and steel siding, because they require little maintenance, are being used more and more despite a somewhat higher cost at present.