

Central heating has been widely used for many years, the most common form involving circulation of warm air from a furnace in the basement. In the older houses the air was usually circulated by gravity with coal as the fuel. Most houses today, however, use a forced-air system powered by electrically-operated fans. Oil fuel is common in Eastern Canada, but in the West natural gas is being increasingly used for heating purposes.

Modern houses are fully insulated, an air-tight blanket in walls and ceilings protecting the occupants from extremes of either winter or summer climate. Double windows, with an insulating air-space between, are required in most parts of the country and these have now been perfected to the point where they are available in the large "picture-window" sizes which have become so popular.

Although central heating dispenses with the actual need for fireplaces, they are, nonetheless, increasingly in demand by the modern home-buyer.

While many of the older houses, particularly in rural areas, lack proper plumbing facilities, all newer houses have indoor sanitation and fully-equipped bathrooms. Copper has largely replaced steel in water pipes and, as might be expected in view of the severity of the climate, all pipes are located inside the house.

Electricity plays a key role in the Canadian housewife's life and modern houses are fitted with 100-amp electrical service. Domestic circuits usually carry a voltage of 110 and all appliances, with the exception of the cooking stove, are built accordingly. The increasing use of electrical appliances such as automatic washing machines, clothes driers, floor polishers, dishwashers and miscellaneous kitchen equipment has placed a heavy load on existing circuits in many older homes, with the result that complete re-wiring has often become necessary.

It is perhaps inevitable that, in a period of rapid growth, more attention should be devoted to problems of planning. Certainly, in recent years, municipal governments have become more receptive to the ideas of town-planners and many towns and cities have either added technically qualified planners to their staffs or have retained part-time consultants.

Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation has stimulated interest in good subdivision design and house grouping. As well as among builders and municipal officials, it has encouraged fresh thinking on the part of students. By offering scholarships and bursaries to encourage training for a planning career, CMHC has helped the number of trained, professional planners. These have been further supplemented by planners brought by the Corporation from abroad.

CMHC also contributed to the setting up of the Community Planning Association of Canada, an organization providing a focal point for those interested in problems of modern planning, and the Canadian Housing Design Council, formed in 1956.

Early in 1962, the Canadian Council on Urban and Regional Research was founded. Though not intended to undertake its own research programmes, the Council will have as its main function the encouragement of further research on the subject of urban planning by universities and other bodies. It will also act as a clearing-house for the information thus obtained.