

Other imported home construction products that have potential in Mexico include:

- space heaters
- high-tech carpets
- insulating material
- decoration and finishing products
- hardware
- aluminum and wood doors and windows
- kitchen and bathroom fixtures
- domestic plumbing products
- locks and security systems
- coating materials for weatherproofing
- roofing materials
- carpets, flooring and curtains

NEW BUILDING TECHNIQUES AND MATERIALS

The tremendous demand for housing coupled with the shortage of capital is forcing Mexican builders to consider any technology that can reduce construction costs. Economizing on materials is becoming a major priority. About 80 percent of housing construction costs go to materials and only 20 percent to labour. Builders are investigating a range of prefabricated materials and building techniques, and prefabrication may help to make wood more acceptable. Regardless of the materials used, however, the final appearance of the house must be compatible with Mexican culture and tastes.

Both the *Fondo de Operación y Financiamiento Bancario a la Vivienda (FOVI)*, Federal Housing Fund, and the *Instituto del Fondo Nacional para la Vivienda de los Trabajadores (INFONAVIT)*, Housing Pension Fund for Private Sector Employees, have recently financed housing projects constructed using prefabricated components such as slabs and beams. In addition, both agencies have experimental projects underway using prefabricated wood components for low-income housing projects. These agencies are working with universities and other entities to research building systems and materials.