

# Construction, Building and Forestry Products



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RESEARCH COUNCIL CANADA

**T**he construction and building products industry is one of Canada's largest and strongest, with an annual output of \$90 billion. Access to a rich and abundant supply of indigenous materials, combined with a highly skilled, efficient labour force and ample manufacturing capacity, has fuelled a 60-percent increase in the industry's exports in the last three years.

The international competitiveness of Canada's construction and building products is further enhanced by the willingness of Canadian companies to work with foreign partners to establish building standards and practices. Canada's building codes are constantly upgraded, and products must meet the exacting standards of the Canadian Standards Association. Canadian technologies in this area also reflect the high priority placed on quality and energy conservation, while making efficient use of sustainable resources.

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With exports expected to continue growing, Canada offers outstanding investment opportunities for countries the world over. Furthermore, the North American Free Trade Agreement gives investors tariff-free access to a construction and building products market valued at more than US\$600 billion.

## HOUSING

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Canadians are among the best-housed people in the world. Weather conditions, which vary from harsh, dry winters to hot, humid summers, have forced Canadian scientists to take the lead in developing world-class technologies in air control, heat and moisture flow, durability and fire safety. Canadian housing products incorporate first-rate building technologies exemplified by the Canadian-developed R2000 standard, which ensures that products provide maximum energy conservation and optimum internal air quality and comfort.

Canadian expertise in the industry ranges from complete turnkey projects, for which Canada is renowned in such places as China and Germany, to finished manufactured components. Canada is recognized as a world leader in manufactured or prefabricated housing, with exports in this area more than tripling in the last three years. Available as complete systems, Canada's prefabricated, wood-frame housing systems are easily transported and can be constructed quickly, and both systems are earthquake resistant. Possessing many of the same qualities, Canadian panelled housing systems are equally suited to export markets.

Many Canadian companies are incorporating a Healthy Housing approach to design, construction or refurbishing methods, making the best use of environmentally friendly materials that require less energy to manufacture and reduce pollution inside the home. The Healthy Housing approach to energy efficiency combines high levels of insulation, solar heating and efficient appliances to dramatically reduce energy consumption.

Canadians are also at the forefront in high-rise construction technologies such as concrete composite systems, having pioneered the leading flying-form construction techniques for medium- and high-rise apartment blocks.

## BUILDING PRODUCTS AND MATERIALS

Canada's building products sector encompasses more than 400 different manufactured products, valued at \$39.7 billion annually. Among the highly competitive products in which Canada excels are windows, doors

