



Canada: Exporting Factory-Built Homes

Ruth Williamson
Brian Pfeiffer
August 2008

Background

In order to enter the Canadian market, U.S. factory-built and mobile home manufacturers must obtain certification from the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), a non-profit membership-based organization that works to develop standards in Canada. The process is multi-step, involving conformance, approval and bi-annual inspection.

The first step U.S. manufacturers looking to export into Canada should take is to access the most recent edition of CSA-A277, *Procedure for Factory Certification of Buildings*. A download is available online for \$80 (CAD) at <http://www.csa-intl.org/onlinestore/GetCatalogDrillDown.asp?Parent=1654>, and a hardcover version can be ordered for \$90 (CAD). The CSA-A277 specifies the procedure for factory certification of manufactured, modular, and panelized buildings intended for both residential and commercial use. The standard covers work completed within the factory, but does not address the transport or installation of the building. Specifically, the guidelines lay out the requirements necessary for: (a) certification of the factory quality program, (b) certification of the built product, (c) auditing of the factory quality program, and (d) in-factory inspection of the built product.

Once conformance with the standards of the CSA-A277 is met, manufacturers must submit building plans and proposals for certification to the CSA. After submission of all the application materials an on-site inspection is required and typically takes place within six weeks of the receipt of the completed application. Estimated costs of the initial certification process may vary between \$10,000 and \$15,000 (CAD), and certified labels cost \$100 (CAD) each per finished home system.

Manufacturers are further subject to two CSA annual inspections at a cost of about \$1,000 to \$2,000 (CAD). Regional CSA officers, located throughout the U.S, handle annual inspections at the manufacturers' sites. CSA members are charged \$1,500 (CAD) in annual membership fees.

Additional information on the Factory-Built Homes industry can be found on the websites of two organizations that track data for the sector: the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and the Canadian Manufactured Housing Institute (CMHI).

The CMHC, in 2006, published the only comprehensive summary of the manufactured homes industry in the country. The report, *Profile and Prospects of the Factory-Built Housing Industry in Canada*, can be found at [ftp://ftp.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/chic-ccd/h/Research Reports-Rapports de recherche/eng_unilingual/Profileprospects\(W\).pdf](ftp://ftp.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/chic-ccd/h/Research Reports-Rapports de recherche/eng_unilingual/Profileprospects(W).pdf).

The CMHI also publishes quarterly reports on the industry with indicators, production statistics, and highlights of the sector. These reports are currently not on the website, but can be obtained by contacting the institute. You may wish to check their website at www.cmhi.ca for periodic updates.

Implications and Opportunities for U.S. Firms

Canada is the largest importer of U.S.-made factory-built homes. With the weakened housing sector in the U.S. this is an opportune time for American manufacturers of factory-built homes to consider Canada as an export destination.

Sources

Canadian Standards Association (CSA)
Canadian Manufactured Housing Institute (CMHI)

For More Information

The U.S. Commercial Service in Toronto, Canada can be contacted via e-mail at: ruth.williamson@mail.doc.gov; Phone: (416) 595-5412, ext. 238; Fax: (416) 595-5419; or visit our website: www.buyusa.gov/canada.

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