To meet the demand, for low-cost housing, this Florida company responded with an all-steel, prefabricated panel design.

When the Florida construction market suffered its economic body blow last year, one company, Chapman Industries, of Hialeah, Fla., a major South Florida supplier to the drywall and plastering trades, did something about it.

Needing not only volume to sustain the firm’s business of supplying the trades with wallboard, bag goods, steel studs, and accessory items, but also needing to sustain its manufacturing capability, Chapman Industries responded by coming up with an innovation in housing.

The company created a truly low cost house that would utilize its products while providing work for its drywall and plastering contractor-customers. For contractors interested in meeting the challenge of low cost housing, the Chapman Industries’ innovation may represent an entry into the residential market.

Introduced less than a year ago, the house has attracted considerable publicity throughout Florida, the Caribbean countries, South and Central America and other foreign countries. Models have already been built in Guatemala, St. Kitts, Saudi Arabia, several Florida locations, and several more are currently under construction.

What makes the Chapman Industries home so attractive is the (Continued on Page 24)
fact that, it can be constructed from the slab to move-in in only 7 days, and the two-bedroom, 616 square foot structure can be built for only $5,000 to $6,000. This figure does not, of course, include the lot, sewerage and outside electrical hook-ups.

But it does include a beautiful, durable cement plaster house with four-inch walls reinforced with two-inch galvanized structural steel studs, complete with kitchen cabinets, doors, windows, and finished painting, plumbing, and electrical work.

The house, the fruition of a long dream by W. W. Chapman, president of the company, is now being marketed here and abroad by two authorized companies, Low Cost Housing Systems, Inc., and by Low Cost Housing Systems International Inc.

For a wall and ceiling contractor looking at the residential market to replace some of the lost volume in high rises, condominiums, and private commercial work, the Chapman Industries' home offers a number of benefits.

The house can be built by anyone who can do drywall and/or plastering; no radical changes in the work process is required; there is no great cost involved in getting into the market and probably no additional equipment will be needed, and the set-up can be profitable because so many houses can be built in such a short time that overall earnings are said to be exceptional.

Some 18 patents are now pending and the company claims that three metal men, four plasterers, four laborers, plus an electrician and a plumber can build three houses every four days once the slab is in place.

Furthermore, a minimum of materials are used because the interior and exterior walls and the roof are all made of the same material, using the same procedures. The most expensive item needed is a plaster pump.

Because it is a true system using conventional materials and techniques rather than a modular or prefabricated house, the system lends itself to all types and styles of house designs and this flexibility can also include school rooms, small clinics, town houses, apartment buildings, motels, small shopping centers, and other light commercial applications.

Shipped in a package to the site by LCHS, the walls are assembled on the job and then put in place. The steel framework takes only about five hours to complete.

With the framework in place, the plasterers apply a “scratch” coat before the plaster cement is pumped into the walls. A special cement additive allows vertical pump with about one-inch application at a time. The finish coat is then applied and the only work remaining is finish up.

Some of the features that the system offers to interested contractors: 1) the monolithic structure offers great strength; 2) the house can be insulated against heat and cold; 3) LCHS ships and packages all materials but will assist with local steel purchases if it’s more advantageous and the contractor may also make local purchases for windows, doors, plumbing, electrical fixtures and the like; 4) the only tools needed are screw guns, a cement plaster pump and mixer, and power nailers (optional).

So carefully planned is the system that a Chapman Industries spokesman said the material needed for an entire house could probably be taken to the job site in the back of a pick-up truck.

A number of areas that could prove difficult in most home building operations have been neatly solved by the Chapman system. For example, in the case of roofs, they are scratch coated from the inside and the entire roof is pumped at one time. The cement additive, incidentally, causes the cement to expand and thus lowers the amount of cement used and thus reduces weight with no sacrifice in insulation factor.