Galvanized steel framing builds better houses, says the Zinc Institute, and wall and ceiling contractors with steel framing expertise should take a close look at the potential.

More and more homes are going the steel frame route rather than the traditional wood studs.

To keep this trend moving, the Zinc Institute has erected a steel-framed house exhibit and sets it up at nearly every homebuilder convention it can get the house into. The latest public demonstration was the National Homebuilders Show in Las Vegas—and thousands of contractors checked out the possibility of galvanized steel framing.

The Zinc Institute’s model house is a cut-away steel-framed house, 32 ft. x 30 ft. It proves how standard galvanized steel installation practices can provide savings for the homebuilder. Such obvious savings as side and end walls of the exhibit were installed 24-in. on center, as were the floor joints.

Roof trusses were specially designed and placed 24-in. on center. Since these placements differ from placements of traditional wood house framing components which are usually installed on 16-in. centers, the steel used represented only 2/3s as much material as wood to frame the house.

What makes the steel framed house so popular among contractors interested in looking at the residential market is the ease with which the framing members were joined—and how easily they can be used in conjunction with standard construction materials such as metal lath, plywood, and galvanized steel siding.

Wall and ceiling contractors will be interested to know that the use of these various components for a variety of housing construction has involved not only the U.S. but Canada, Mexico and other countries as well. The house buying public is increasingly becoming aware of the benefits of steel framing, an awareness that bodes well for the contractor willing to move into this marketing environment.

ZI’s booth was built with the cooperation of several companies who are well known to wall and ceiling contractors. The companies include Angeles Metal Systems, Los Angeles; U.S. Gypsum Corporation, Chicago; U.S. Steel Corporation, Pittsburgh, Inryco Corp., Milwaukee, and Wheeling Corrugating Company, Wheeling, WV.

Literature from the above companies and the Zinc Institute, as well as from the American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI), is available.

The use of galvanized steel studs, joists and trusses as replacements for wood framing elements is becoming a fast-growing concept in the homebuilding industry, with over 10,000 steel-framed homes and apartment buildings already erected. Some of the reasons for the acceptance of steel framing include: galvanized steel components are 2½ times stronger than wood, weigh 1/3 less and can cut the cost of building up to 30 percent.

Zinc Institute Inc., a non-profit organization, is the trade association of the zinc industry of the U.S. and Canada with substantial support from producers in other countries of the world, as well as fabricators and consumers: The Institute does not produce or sell zinc but collects and distributes information relative to the uses of this metal wherever required.