



MODUS

The look and feel of modular classrooms has changed over the years.

Schools leading the way with green modular construction

JEAN SORENSEN, correspondent

The green wave in building is rolling over the modular construction industry. Schools in B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and even the Northwest Territories are leading the way as governments are awakening to the opportunities that factory-built structures provide in achieving sustainable standards.

Modular builders are also well positioned to claw-back much of their cold-climate building technology and utilize it to meet emergent mainstream sustainability demands.

Alberta has been the first province to achieve 18 LEED Silver certified schools using modular structures as part of a design-build process.

The provincial government wants to achieve greener schools and it has opted for builders, who can deliver those sustainability features. . . .

Whereas Modular units have only been seen as a solution to a tight schedule, remote area or tight building lot, factory construction provides better quality control, recycling of waste material, and environmental advantages. It requires less transportation for the delivery of goods to site compared to conventional building.

Alberta Infrastructure has also awarded a contract for 10 schools to a design-build consortium, and the modular units are going to Modus, an Alberta company that is scooping up school contracts by providing what it calls "green" learning environments.

It has built more than 600 schools in Alberta using its systems and structural insulated panels. . .

Both the system of construction and the materials used are LEED compliant. . . As early as February 2009, Modus delivered its first of 50 LEED Silver compliant modular classrooms for the Alberta government, after gaining LEED certification for its modular building process.

In December 2009, Modus was also awarded the contract for 24 new "green" modular childcare facilities.

The Saskatchewan government has ordered 31 Modus green modular classrooms and childcare facilities for schools across the province.

The Modus units are made from non-toxic materials, designed to provide optimum light, high performance HVAC systems and building materials are self-extinguishing in the event of a fire.