



Could Cargo Containers be the Next Big Thing?

The use of intermodal shipping containers as the building blocks for residential and commercial structures has been reported by ABC, Fox, USA Today, the Huffington Post and other national and regional media outlets.

Three Squared Inc., a property development firm based in Detroit, is highly involved in this emerging market. The company has used or plans to use shipping containers to build a condominium complex in Detroit, recreational cabins on Lake Tahoe, housing and a mess hall for oilfield workers in North Dakota and Nevada, and even a 1,000-home development in Haiti, among other projects.

Leslie Horn, CEO of Three Squared, offers 10 reasons why it makes sense to convert shipping containers into buildings:

- 1) Multiple Applications** — Containers work for both residential and commercial buildings, from single-family homes to motels, offices, schools and dormitories. Container-based construction provides a practical solution for coping with housing needs after wars and natural disasters.
- 2) Availability** — It's estimated that more than 700,000 used containers are stockpiled in the U.S. because the country imports many more manufactured goods than it exports.
- 3) Protective and Weather Resistant** — Container design offers a level of infrastructure protection not found in traditional construction. For example, containers can easily withstand 150 mile per hour winds.
- 4) Time and Cost Savings** — Containers save 60 percent of the framing cost and cut construction time in half. Savings also

come from reduced labor costs, as well as lower maintenance and repair needs and energy efficiency.

- 5) Strength and Durability** — Container-based construction far exceeds traditional stick-built and most modular construction. Steel containers will not rot, and the frame can withstand severe damage in natural disasters.
- 6) Creativity and Flexibility** — The strong containers enable designers to think more creatively about the construction process. And although the containers come in standard sizes, the possibilities for combining them are endless.
- 7) Environmentally Responsible** — The containers are being recycled into good use, do not rely on trees, and provide energy efficiencies.
- 8) Expands Shelter Accessibility** — Where quality shelter is hard find, containers offer an effective solution. With a price as low as \$900 each, used shipping containers offer an inexpensive construction medium.
- 9) Mobility** — Containers can be stacked on top of each other and moved quite readily. Their interlocking mechanism facilitates mobility, and they can be easily disassembled, moved and reassembled.
- 10) Higher Profitability** — With reduced costs for framing and labor, and the ability to generate revenue sooner by expediting the building timeline, builders using container construction are achieving higher profitability.

To learn more about container construction, visit www.threesquaredinc.com.