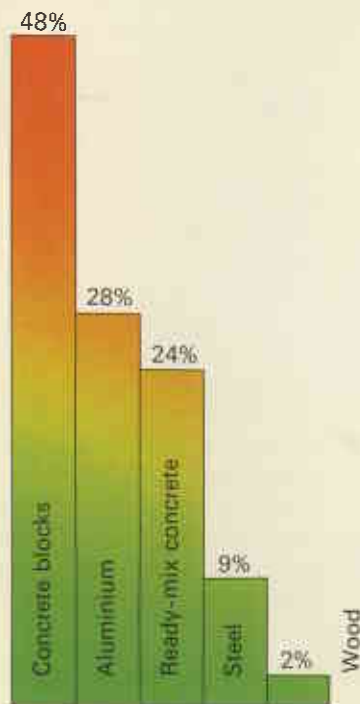


Now for a few good words about wood . . .

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Wood is the building material that produces the least harmful impact on the environment, according to an Oregon University study. Reporting in the *Journal of Forestry*, Business Administration Professor C. W. Dane graded five common building products on the basis of their *hidden costs to society*.



Hidden social costs as a percentage of price.

The worst marks went to concrete blocks, which would experience a price increase of 48 per cent if manufacturers were required to bear the costs of their effect on the environment, Professor Dane said.

Comparing the social costs as a percentage of price, aluminium would cost an additional 28 per cent;



▲ *Two examples of timber used for structural purposes. Above, termite-proofed pine framing and roof timbers of a semi A-frame home at Australind, built by F. and L. M. Burke. Below, the huge new Bunnings building at Welshpool, supported by 705 by 127 mm glue laminated jarrah arches and spanning 19.5 m. The building is 110.95 m long with 8.53 m maximum internal height.*



ready-mix concrete an additional 24 per cent; and steel, which requires 10 tons of non-renewable raw materials for each ton produced, rated 9 per cent.

Wood creates the least impact on the environment primarily because it is renewable. Professor Dane estimates timber's hidden cost to society as 2 per cent.

