EXPLOSIVE GROWTH

Jason Burroughs has carved out a global niche in blast-resistant structures

After an explosion at a Texas refinery killed 15 people and injured 170 in 2005, Jason Burroughs realized the oil and gas industry needed blast-resistant structures that could be placed in explosion-prone areas.

A year later, Burroughs founded Paramount Structures in Calgary and he has since guided the company to a global reputation for building structures that will survive massive explosions. The simplest model looks like a core can and goes for around $100,000 depending on size and customization, but the company has ventured into more complex buildings of up to 6,000 square feet that can house large break rooms, site security operations or the like.

Burroughs spent years engineering the shelters, scoping the globe for ideas and inspiration. "I heard a Chinese had one material - magnesium oxide - that I was very interested in," he says. "That helped create the fire-resistant, mold-resistant barrier."

The company also builds more conventional structures with the same resistance to fire, water, and mold. Burroughs says they’re durable enough that they could help alleviate one of Canada’s most intractable problems. "Is there possible solution to the housing crisis on First Nations," he says. "We are communicating with a number of First Nations right now."

Paramount now has module yards in Spruce Grove and Sherwood Park, 31 full-time employees and revenue of $8.8 million. It placed 12th on this year’s Fast Growth 50 list.