FRERES
ENGINEERED WOOD

**NEWS RELEASE**

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# Freres Wood Wins Fast Company's Innovation by Design Award

*Mass Plywood Warehouse honored for trail-blazing, sustainable construction*

**LYONS, Ore., Sept. 15, 2025** – Today, Fast Company officially announced the winners of their 2025 Innovation by Design Award, including Freres Engineered Wood's revolutionary Mass Plywood Warehouse. The prestigious global design competition named Freres Wood the winner of the *Design/Make* category as well as a finalist in the *Experimental and Conceptual Design* category. These renowned awards recognize the world's most innovative businesses, highlighting impactful design solutions that address crucial issues like climate change.

Large warehouse construction has historically relied on concrete tilt-up or pre-engineered metal buildings, both of which are significant greenhouse gas emitters. Freres Wood's newly constructed Mass Plywood Warehouse, built entirely with the company's original Mass Ply products, demonstrates how mass timber can provide a reliable and sustainable substitute for traditional, high-emissions building materials like concrete and steel. The Fast Company award underscores Freres Wood's longtime reputation as a leader in industrial construction, reshaping the space through mass timber products.

"We are proud to receive Fast Company's Innovation by Design Award and consider it a testament to the remarkable potential of mass timber to transform the construction industry," said Rob Freres, president of Freres Engineered Wood. "Our Mass Plywood Warehouse offers tangible evidence that sustainable materials like Mass Ply can not only match the performance of traditional construction methods, but even exceed them."

The 60,000-square-foot warehouse, designed with a 40 ft. by 48 ft. grid, includes four truck-loading stations, two tarping stations, and storage for 6,000 units of plywood. Officially opened in October 2024, the project stands as a milestone for mass timber, proving wood is not just a sustainable alternative but a superior choice for industrial construction:

- **Reduced Carbon Footprint**: By using mass timber, the project avoided 429 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions — equal to removing 325 cars from the road for a year.
- **Fast, Cost-Effective Build Time**: Prefabricated Mass Ply walls cut labor costs by reducing the typical build timeline by three months compared to concrete.
- **Superior Performance**: Mass Ply products outperform many traditional and mass timber materials, offering superior strength, fire resistance, and seismic durability.
- **Biophilic Design**: Employees report a warm, inviting atmosphere, highlighting the impact of building with wood on workplace well-being.

“We hope this recognition inspires greater ingenuity across the construction industry,” says Rob Freres. “It reinforces our commitment to developing innovative solutions that advance sustainable building practices, strengthen economic vitality in our communities, and significantly reduce the industry’s environmental impact.”

For more information about Freres Engineered Wood’s Mass Ply Warehouse and Mass Ply products, visit www.frereswood.com.

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**About Freres Engineered Wood Products**

Freres Lumber Co., Inc., DBA Freres Engineered Wood, has a 100-year history of innovation in the wood products industry, beginning in 1922 when T.G. Freres started a small sawmill in Oregon’s Santiam Canyon. Today, Freres’ operations include finished plywood, lumber, veneer and structural composite lumber, Mass Ply products, biochar, and a cogeneration facility that supplies renewable power for the local area. Known for being traditionally innovative, Freres is deeply committed to its community and to sustainable forest management practices. The company uses 100 percent of the wood it processes throughout its three operations—Freres Engineered Wood Products, Freres Timber and Evergreen BioPower LLC—and six wood products facilities. Freres provides family wage jobs to nearly 500 employees. For more information, visit www.frereswood.com or call 503-859-2121.

**NOTES**

Freres Engineered Wood's new Mass Plywood Warehouse was built entirely with the company's Mass Ply products, demonstrating a competitive, low-carbon alternative to traditional concrete tilt-up construction and pre-engineered metal buildings in the industrial warehouse construction space… Our new Mass Plywood Warehouse is a groundbreaking example of Mass Ply's potential, demonstrating how mass timber can replace conventional building materials while reducing costs, saving time, and lowering emissions. Traditionally, large warehouses rely on concrete tilt-up or prefabricated metal buildings, both of which are significant CO2 emitters. Needing a new warehouse for our growing product line, we seized the opportunity to showcase Mass Ply's potential. Our 60,000-square-foot warehouse proves that mass timber is a viable, eco-friendly alternative to concrete and steel, while maintaining structural integrity, cutting costs, and accelerating build times. Designed with a 40 ft. by 48 ft. grid, it includes four truck loading stations, two tarping stations, and storage for 6,000 units of plywood. Mass Ply products outperform many traditional and mass timber materials, offering superior strength, fire resistance, and seismic durability. Unlike concrete and steel, wood sequesters carbon, reducing environmental impact. By using MPP and MPL, we avoided 429 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions—equal to removing 325 cars from the road for a year. Mass Ply also helps thin overstocked forests, reducing wildfire risks. Beyond sustainability, prefabricated MPP walls allowed for a faster, more cost-effective build, reducing the build timeline by three months compared to concrete. The total project cost was $6.9 million, with long-term operational efficiencies adding further value. Officially occupied in October 2024, employees have praised the warm, inviting atmosphere, highlighting the benefits of biophilic architectural design. The Mass Plywood Warehouse marks a milestone for mass timber, proving wood is not just a sustainable alternative but a superior choice for industrial construction.

Congratulations! *Mass Plywood Warehouse* has been recognized in **Fast Company's 2025 Innovation by Design Awards**, honored in the following category:

- **Winner in the Design/Make category**
- **Finalist in the Experimental and Conceptual Design category**

Please note: This news is **embargoed until September 15**, when the full list goes live online. Our editors are also excited to feature the Innovation by Design winners and finalists in the Fall issue of *Fast Company*, available on newsstands beginning September 23. Honorable mentions, finalists, and winners will be featured on fastcompany.com.

We know we said we'd wait until early September to share this news—but we just couldn't keep it to ourselves! Especially with the **Innovation by Design Awards Reception** quickly approaching.

We'll be celebrating all honorable mentions, finalists, and winners on **Tuesday, September 16**, in **New York City**, and we'd love for you to join us.

This exclusive event will recognize **Freres Engineered Wood**'s achievement with a special trophy, alongside an evening of celebration, cocktails, passed hors d'oeuvres, and networking with some of the world's most interesting business leaders and designers. The reception is part of our annual **Innovation Festival** and is expected to sell out fast.