



NEWS RELEASE

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Freres Lumber Installs First Horizontal Plywood Press in the United States

LYONS, ORE. 28 Jan., 2020—[Freres Lumber Co.](#), Inc. is the first U.S. company to install and operate the [Taihei Horizontal Press](#) Model P25-AB, a horizontal hot press for laminating plywood after the gluing and prepressing processes. In keeping with its history as a leader in early adoption and innovation, Freres is already reaping the numerous benefits the horizontal press offers over the conventional U.S. vertical press technology. The horizontal press differs from conventional vertical presses in that the heat plates are installed vertically and apply pressure to the plywood horizontally.

The new press was installed between Thanksgiving and Christmas and was fully operational on December 17, 2019. This horizontal press increases production efficiency, maximizes the uniformity of contact pressure, is easier to install and maintain, is safer and is more energy efficient than the conventional U.S. vertical presses. Unlike the U.S. vertical presses, the horizontal press does not require a dedicated operator—the system has an automatic feed system. Even modern vertical chargers, which transfer pre-pressed panels to the press, require an operator to manually feed every panel into the press.

This latest investment reflects Freres' commitment to providing new, high-quality products to the plywood and engineered wood markets. The horizontal press is designed to produce 10-foot plywood, which will provide the opportunity to produce long-length panels in the future, though the company has no plans to do so at this time. Additionally, the new system has a small footprint in relation to the number of platens, allowing Freres to install this 60-opening press, where previously there had been a 24-opening press.

Typical U.S. presses are limited in height due to the fact that a foundation pit as deep as the press is tall must be constructed. The pits are dirty, contain equipment that is difficult to maintain, and the overall design limits the number of platens on the press. The new horizontal press, however, sits on a cement slab.

"We are committed to investing in advanced technology to keep Freres current and competitive, and have always looked to the future when making equipment and product decisions," said Kyle Freres, vice president of operations for Freres Lumber. "This new horizontal press will broaden the range of products we can offer, by freeing up two other presses to accept additional production from our spreader and our PLV (parallel-laminated veneer) line."

Taihei, based out of Aichi, Japan, designed and produced the press. Installation crews were

sourced locally, but Taihei supervised the installation. Freres used Adams Construction from Stayton to help with the concrete work, BMI Contractors from Salem for the equipment installation, and Olsson Controls from Eugene for the electrical field work. Olsson Controls also did the electrical design for Taihei.

“Taihei was a great partner and provided excellent customer service,” said Freres, “as did everyone involved in the install.” Taihei has a local shop in Eugene and makes other products including knife grinders, knife honers and veneer dryers.

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About Freres Lumber Company

Established in 1922, Freres Lumber is among Oregon’s premier engineered wood products manufacturing companies. Specializing in bringing high-quality wood products to market, Freres manufactures finished plywood products, lumber, veneers and structural composite lumber, and continues to transform and modernize building practices with its latest innovation, Mass Plywood Panel (MPP). The company follows sustainable management practices throughout its three operations—Freres Lumber Co., Freres Timber and Evergreen BioPower LCC, using 100 percent of its materials in its products or as fuel. Freres is committed to providing family wage jobs, and operates six wood products facilities, including a cogeneration facility. For more information, visit www.frereslumber.com or call 503-859-2121.