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STORY ANGLES

Engineered lumber leader RedBuilt has many interesting stories to tell

50 years old yet brand spanning new

RedBuilt™, as the former commercial division of Trus Joist® Corp., is celebrating its golden anniversary in 2010. Founded in Boise on May 15, 1960, by wholesale lumberman Harold “Red” Thomas and inventor Art Troutner, the Commercial Division of Trus Joist is renowned throughout architectural, construction, and engineering circles as the inventor of what was at the time an entirely new building materials category known as engineered-wood products. In August 2009, a partnership between a private equity firm called Atlas Holdings and a group of former leaders of Trus Joist acquired the commercial division of Trus Joist from Weyerhaeuser Co., moved the headquarters back to Boise, and renamed the company RedBuilt.

Innovative products that help earn LEED® green-building certification

RedBuilt possesses chain-of-custody certificates for its engineered wood products from the Forest Stewardship Council®, plus they meet the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® fiber-sourcing standards.

A resource-efficient alternative to steel and plated trusses

RedBuilt open-web trusses provide architects, engineers, specifiers, and builders with a more resource-efficient alternative to steel and plated trusses. RedBuilt open-web trusses combine the best of wood and steel, delivering high-strength-to-weight ratios and long-span capabilities. By substituting technology for mass, open-web trusses use less steel and incorporate a renewable resource — wood — plus their manufacture consumes far less energy and they are easily adapted to customary framing methods. As an alternative to metal-plate-connected wood trusses and glulam systems, RedBuilt open-web trusses use far less wood.

Decommodifying a commodity

Not all engineered wood products are created equal, but what truly elevates RedBuilt’s offerings beyond the status of commodities are the value adds the company has brought to the table for five decades: engineering prowess, unsurpassed support, soup-to-nuts stewardship, and the quality of its associates. In addition to delivering extraordinary in-house engineering consulting and onsite technical support services nationwide, RedBuilt gives customers peace of mind by providing a limited lifetime warranty and repair services, maintaining records for most open-web projects completed since the company’s inception in 1960, and possessing an institutionalized knowledge of local, state, and national building codes. Taking a consultative sales approach that focuses on solving customers’ specific design challenges, RedBuilt is often sought as a single-source supplier for all things related to wood building design and construction.

Engineering solutions to the old-growth controversy

RedBuilt makes more efficient use of wood fiber and helps extend our world's forest resources, alleviating pressure on old-growth forests while delivering a steady supply of quality, renewable building products. The company accomplishes this by employing smaller trees from second- and third-growth forests grown on a sustainable-yield basis — wood that could not previously be used for large-dimension structural framing lumber by virtue of its size or strength. The company's technologies can take poor-quality wood from 8-inch-diameter trees and turn it into structural lumber up to 4 feet across, 3-1/2 inches thick, and 80 feet long. As a result, RedLam™ LVL, Red-I™ joists, and RedBuilt open-web trusses use fewer trees and reduce the need to harvest old-growth forests. They also reduce the amount of wood required to frame a building by upwards of 50 percent and shrink the acreage of timberland required to produce equivalent amounts of solid-sawn 2x10s and 2x12s by upwards of 60 percent.

Using wood more efficiently

Employing RedBuilt engineered wood products reduces pressure on our natural resources by making better use of logs. For instance, traditional processes used to manufacture solid-sawn lumber typically convert just 40 percent of a log to structural lumber. RedLam LVL and Red-I joists improve that conversion by 30 percent and 43 percent, respectively. Furthermore, RedBuilt products decrease the structural wood consumption in buildings. For instance, a floor can be supported with almost half as much wood when built with Red-I joists. Their structurally efficient "I" shape puts the bulk of the wood where it's most needed from a structural standpoint — on the top and bottom. This enables builders to support floors with less wood. The configuration of RedBuilt open-web trusses similarly reduces wood (and steel) consumption.

New, exciting design possibilities

The enhanced quality, predictable strength and exceptional load-bearing characteristics, and long-span capabilities of RedBuilt's engineered wood products create tremendous design possibilities outside the realm of standard lumber. This allows architects, engineers, specifiers, and builders to create structures that might otherwise require steel — a more expensive, environmentally inferior, and less workable option.

Reducing job-site waste

Because RedBuilt engineered wood products are manufactured to strict quality criteria, builders can substantially reduce their job-site waste. While as much as 11 percent of traditional lumber might not be used at a job site because of poor quality, waste is virtually eliminated with RedLam LVL, Red-I joists, and RedBuilt open-web trusses — usually less than 1 percent, which typically is the result of saw cuts at the job site.

Build a better building with RedBuilt

Whether you're building a new structure or remodeling an existing one, RedBuilt engineered wood products are the materials of choice. Because they're stronger and can span greater distances than ordinary lumber, they improve a building's structural integrity. Plus they're easy to work with, and since they're structurally superior to ordinary, solid-sawn lumber, RedLam LVL, Red-I joists, and RedBuilt open-web trusses give architects, engineers, specifiers, and builders more design flexibility. Furthermore, they won't change shape before or after installation and are backed by a lifetime guarantee. And RedBuilt guarantees it will respond to customer problems in 24 hours or less.

Enjoy superior-performing lumber

RedBuilt engineered wood products are substantially higher in quality than the commodity lumber it replaces. RedLam LVL, Red-I joists, and RedBuilt open-web trusses are stiffer and more stable than ordinary lumber, so they can span greater distances. And pound for pound they're much stronger than old-fashioned building materials, so they can support very heavy loads with very little mass. Another advantage is that — unlike regular lumber — RedBuilt products have most of the moisture removed during the manufacturing process so they won't change shape before or after they're installed. In addition, the naturally occurring defects that are present in ordinary lumber, such as knots and pitch pockets, are minimized and randomized in RedBuilt products — significantly reducing their effects on the structural quality of the material. The engineered properties also help eliminate callbacks, which can be expensive in terms of time and money, as well as in customer satisfaction.

Easier installation

RedBuilt engineered wood products are as easy to work with as traditional solid-sawn lumber — in fact, sometimes they're easier. For instance, Red-I joists require much less effort to handle and install than joists made from ordinary lumber. They're much lighter than conventional lumber — typically weighing half as much. And because they employ a structurally efficient "I" shape that uses up to 50 percent less wood than the commodity lumber they replace, one person can easily handle a 30-footer, and a single framer can install an entire floor. Furthermore, it often takes fewer Red-I joists to finish the job than joists made from solid-sawn lumber, because the performance of these products allows more economical spacing than the typical 16-inch centers required for lumber. In addition, there's no need for mid-span blocks in single-story applications when you build with Red-I joists. And since there's less material to buy, there's less material to handle. Finally, all RedBuilt products can be ordered cut to spec and with pre-installed knockout holes for wiring, which eases installation, as well.

An economically health alternative to dimension lumber

Engineered wood products help keep building affordable, increase wood's economic worth by transforming it into value-added products, and create value-added manufacturing jobs. By using less wood and smaller trees, RedBuilt's products minimize the effects of ever-increasing wood prices. They also help reduce overall demand on the forests, which dampens demand-oriented price increases. And RedBuilt's pricing is far less volatile than that of commodity lumber with price shifts of only 5 percent to 10 percent compared to upwards of 40 percent shifts common to the latter. Engineered wood products also enhance quality — spindly trees with weak, flamed wood can be transformed into value-added products with superior strength and consistent quality. In addition, RedBuilt products help reduce job-site labor costs. Available in long lengths, engineered wood products can easily accommodate multiple spans with little labor, and the light weight of Red-I joists makes for easy handling. Consistent quality eliminates waste and chores of culling bad lumber, planning crowned lumber, and other time-consuming practices resulting from lower-quality lumber.

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