

Molin Concrete Products Nearing Completion on a State-of-the-Art, Automated Wall Panel Operation

RAMSEY, MINNESOTA

Molin Concrete Products, a 118-year-old mainstay in the Upper Midwest prestressed concrete industry, is nearing completion on a state-of-the-art, automated wall panel operation located in Ramsey, Minn. The PCI-certified plant was scheduled to start manufacturing in June of this year. The new facility will have a production capacity of 1.5 million square feet per year, producing precast concrete architectural cladding, insulated sandwich wall panels, and solid structural panels. A grand opening celebration is being planned for September 24, 2015.

The new Molin plant will be completely outfitted in just eight months, a process that usually take several years. While the system is somewhat common in Europe, only two other U.S. precast plants currently have similar automated carousel operations in place.

Conveyors form a continuous cycle where wall panel molds are automatically moved from one production station to another with each station performing a specific process. Control comes from a central master controller and production data is transmitted directly to the automated machines. Materials, such as steel reinforcement for panels, are supplied directly to appropriate stations where needed.

Computerized quality control is available at each station. For Molin, the result is faster production and less required labor. It's estimated that the new plant will operate with as little as one-third the labor required in traditional precast concrete plants. For building designers, contractors, and owners, that means higher quality, more consistent products, and faster product availability.

"A typical precast production plant of this capacity," says John Saccoman "would require 48 workers. Our new plant will need just 14 to 18 workers."

The automated plant also requires far less factory space. The capacity of the new Molin plant will be 8,000 square feet of precast panels per day. The main plant floor measures just 80 feet by 350 feet, excluding the batch plant and storage areas. To produce the same amount of panels per day, a traditional precast plant would require four beds measuring 12 feet by 200 feet.

University of New Haven ASCE Student Chapter Wins 5th Place at Northeast Regional Conference

NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

The University of New Haven ASCE student chapter earned 5th place at the Northeast Regional Conference at the University of Maine with its CSI: New Haven canoe. Blakeslee Prestress Inc. generously donated \$275 which was instrumental in facilitating the concrete canoe construction process.

University of New Haven's 2015 American Society of Civil Engineers:



Gate Precast Celebrates 20 Successful Years at Oxford, N.C., Facility

OXFORD, NORTH CAROLINA



Gate Precast's Oxford, N.C., plant recently reached a significant milestone, celebrating 20 years of service to the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic regions. Since opening the facility in June 1995 Gate's Oxford plant has fabricated 11 million square feet of architectural precast concrete and 18 million

square feet of hollow-core concrete slab.

The Oxford plant is SHARP and PCI (A1, C2) Certified, and is among eight Gate manufacturing facilities that regularly engage in the design, engineering, fabrication, transportation, and erection of architectural and structural precast concrete systems. Oxford has an annual capacity of over 700,000 square feet of architectural precast, all produced within a 31,944-square-foot enclosed production facility and an annual capacity of 875,000 square feet of hollow-core produced within a 18,720-square-foot production facility.

A number of employees are celebrating their 20-year anniversary at the Oxford plant as well. Congratulations to Ellis Blalock, Lawrence Brummell, Curtis Clark, Mike Coats, James Glover, David Glover, Toney Harris, David Owen, Roberto Palacios, Andy Parris, Larry Rainey, Al Robinson, Prentice "Dude" Brooks, and Albert Royster.

Frederick W. Heldenfels IV Receives Texas A&M Award

COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

Frederick W. Heldenfels IV, PCI Member and past chair, received the 2015 Distinguished Alumni Award, the highest honor bestowed upon a former student of Texas A&M University. Since the inception of the award in 1962, only 249 of Texas A&M's 425,000 former students have been recognized with the Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Heldenfels has served Texas colleges and universities as chair of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating board and has served as chairman of the 12th Man Foundation board of trustees and twice as a member of its executive committee. He is the current chairman of the A&M PAC Board. He is founder, president and CEO of Heldenfels Enterprises Inc., an Aggie 100 award recipient in 2005, 2006, and 2010. He is a former chair of PCI, and was inducted into the Corpus Christi Business Hall of Fame in 2010. He is a past chairman of both the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Foundation and the Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce, where he helped initiate support for tort reform in the Coastal Bend and creation of a four-year university within The Texas A&M University System.

Heldenfels Enterprises Inc. Announces New Vice President

EL PASO, TEXAS

Adam Mainka has been promoted to vice president of Operations and general manager of Heldenfels Enterprises Inc.'s (HEI's) new plant in El Paso, Tex. In his new role, Mainka will have overall management responsibilities for the El Paso and West Texas market, as well as oversee other production related operations.

Mainka first joined HEI in 2009 as a Quality Control (QC) Technician and was subsequently promoted during his first two years, to QC supervisor and then QC manager. He has also held the positions of plant manager of the San Marcos plant and most recently director of Plant Operations of both the San Marcos and Corpus Christi, Tex., plants.

Mainka holds a PCI level III certification and is active in the industry as co-chair of PCI's productivity committee and chairman of the Leadership PCI program committee. In his latest role, Mainka will play a key role in the company's future expansion and growth.

Kerkstra joins AltusGroup

BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA

Kerkstra Precast has become the seventh precast concrete manufacturer to join AltusGroup® in the past two years, bringing the total number of North American precasters in the organization to an all-time high of 19.

Kerkstra will manufacture CarbonCast® High Performance Insulated Wall Panels and CarbonCast Insulated Architectural Cladding in its Grandville, Mich., production facility just southwest of Grand Rapids, Mich. With more than 50 years in the construction products business, Kerkstra Precast specializes in structural and architectural precast for a wide variety of building types in the Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois markets.

The CarbonCast portfolio of enclosure products uses C-GRID carbon fiber grid as a shear connector to provide outstanding thermal efficiency, continuous insulation, and full composite action to exterior walls while maintaining the remarkable aesthetic flexibility of precast concrete. The trend for thermal and energy efficient enclosures is anticipated to continue into the foreseeable future.

AltusGroup precast concrete manufacturers have installed more than 34 million square feet of CarbonCast surface area on over 900 structures since introducing the technology in 2004.

Spancrete Brings Precast Building Solutions to India Market

WAUKESHA, WISCONSIN

In a partnership with SP Precast Solutions India Private Ltd and MAAD Building Innovations Pvt. Ltd. Group, Spancrete has supplied the first Spancrete Production System in India.

The MAAD Building Innovations Pvt. Ltd. plant in India features the Spancrete GT-120 precast production system.

The new plant provides Spancrete Brand Hollow-core slabs and other precast elements to residential, commercial, and industrial development projects for the MAAD Group's Realty Development department as well as other companies. The plant is owned and operated through a joint venture company established between MAAD Building Innovations Pvt. Ltd. (MBIPL) Group and SP Precast Solutions India Pvt. Ltd.

The MBIPL factory has incorporated the Spancrete GT-120 production system, featuring six casting lines, 200 m each, ensuring high volume and the efficient output of hollow-core 1.2 m wide slabs and wall panels in thickness ranging from 10 cm to 40 cm. Additional precast construction forms were provided by Spancrete to deliver a total structural solution to the India market.

The GT-120 machine system is capable of operating outdoors and is self-feeding, requiring no additional automated material delivery systems and other costly infrastructure. The plant is designed to be mobile, allowing the owners the flexibility to move the entire operation when required. Unique to the MBIPL plant is the minimal infrastructure required to achieve high volume production (250,000+ m² per year capacity).

To assist Indian customers, Spancrete transfers knowledge from its U.S. operations, including engineering, estimating, plant operation, quality control, transport, and installation capabilities. Spancrete has teamed with Precision Precast Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (PPS) to provide support related to ensuring precast design compliance with local Indian building codes. M/s SP Precast Solutions India Pvt. Ltd. has offices in Mumbai, Delhi, and Bangalore.

Spancrete announced the expansion into the India market at the Concrete Show India, shuttling show attendees to the new precast plant for a tour.



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