

Lightweight Wall Panels Progress and Case Study

Wells' Products Development team continues to travel around the country providing education on our latest integrated enclosure system. Interest in these new products is growing in the A/E/C market, just in the last six months, our team has provided weekly presentations on the benefits and features of these integrated enclosure systems.

Wells recently completed manufacturing and erecting our lightweight wall panels for the Mayo Clinic Health System addition in Austin, MN. The \$11.2 million expansion project is currently in its first of six construction phases that will finish the transition of inpatient services from Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea to Austin's campus.

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Wells Restructures Offices and Plants

Over the years, Wells has made a concerted effort to be an innovative leader in the construction industry, with continuous improvements to both our finished products and production processes. Wells has spent considerable time and effort focusing on how to better understand our capacity and client needs, and our production capabilities have come a long way since we began in 1957. Saving our customers time and money is always at the forefront of our development efforts, and with each improvement we find ourselves better able to competitively service our customer base. Most recently, we have focused on the process of enhancing our Albany plant and moving forms between plants based on immediate demand and the result is that we can now most competitively serve the upper Midwest market with our Minnesota-based facilities – Albany, Rosemount, and Wells.

While our Grand Forks, ND division has played a vital role in the company's history, providing precast for a great many beautiful projects in that region, we have decided to close that plant. Key regional industries of agriculture and oil production have both experienced difficulties and have thus created inconsistent demand. When we take this inconsistency, combined with the efficiency efforts described above, it has lead us to a point where we can be more competitive in a three plant scenario even if there is a little more distance to some projects.

Our support of the upper Midwest region will remain unchanged. Our sales team, drafting and engineering, field services, and other departments will remain in Fargo and Grand forks, coordinating with the three production facilities to fulfill the needs of our Upper Midwest clients.

Actions which impact our employee base are extremely difficult and the decision to close Grand Forks production has not come easily. Our Grand Forks production employees are very dedicated and we cannot thank them enough for their efforts and contributions over the past twenty-five years. That said, we are committed to becoming more and more competitive in the marketplace and each of the actions we have taken have been in that direction. In the past ten years, we have closed the Maple Grove facility and built new plants in Rosemount, MN and Albany, MN. For our Mountain States region, we are in the process of consolidating the two existing Denver plants in a newly constructed plant in Brighton, CO. Although each of these have been challenging, the consistent result has been a more competitive cost structure and continued growth of the business.



I would like to personally thank all of you in the general contracting, design and development communities for your continued support and assure you that we are committed to continuous improvement in our quality, schedule and cost structure. Please feel free to reach out anytime with questions or comments you have on our plant structure or any other issues that impact your business.

Dan Juntunen, President & CEO

Project Showcase

HOM Furniture - Bloomington, MN: Wells recently completed installing nearly 60,000 sq. ft. of precast for this new megastore. The exterior façade includes architectural insulated wall panels that boast beautiful white panels with a unique formliner pattern. The lower portion of the panel is a black mix in a block fromliner pattern. After the panels were stripped out of the forms the entire panel received an acid etched finish. The owner was very "hands on" with the design of this high-profile store. Many designs were considered before the final design/textures and colors were selected. Usually, precast manufacturers don't like to use two colors within one panel, but Wells has had experience in doing this type of architectural detail in the past.



Block 9 Tower & Parking Structure - Fargo, ND: Wells manufactured and erected nearly 220,000 combined sq. ft. of precast product between the two projects out of our Grand Forks, Albany, and Rosemount production facilities. The 1,690 precast concrete members in the podium and tower include architectural solid precast components that showcase a beautiful sandblast finish with reveals.

The parking structure is complete with 400 precast concrete members, and the architectural solid wall panels on the ramp boast a beautiful sandblast finish with reveals. Beams, columns and doubles tees will be used to support both the structural and architectural wall panels and ease the construction process by utilizing one building system.

Research & Development Updates: NFPA 285 Fire Test

Testing was completed in July 2019 with favorable results. Final reports have been completed and Wells IES and SlenderWall systems now have their own assembly listing in the UL catalog for FWFO - Exterior Wall Systems: EWS 0051

This is a test of a two story section of our light weight wall panels to verify that our system does not contribute to any vertical flame spread on the exterior of the building. The testing reports will be done on our actual systems so that judgment letters will not be needed.

Winter Construction Benefits with Precast Concrete

In the winter many building contractors slow down, but at Wells, we keep building strong all winter long! When the mercury drops below 50 F, other construction methods such as masonry, hand framed steel studs/ wood studs are not viable. Precast is always manufactured in weather controlled facilities and therefore offers rapid on-site installation and cost effectiveness even in frigid weather.

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