

INSTALLATION BOOSTS MILL EFFICIENCY



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CUSTOMER NAME

Weyerhaeuser Company

CONTRACT AMOUNT

\$1.6 million

LOCATION

Grayling, Michigan

START DATE

March 2018

COMPLETE DATE

October 2018

PARTNERS

Kodiak Construction (General Contractor)



OVERVIEW

As the owner of more than 12 million acres of timberlands in the United States alone, the Weyerhaeuser Company is one of the world's largest manufacturers of wood products. Grayling, Michigan is the home of one of Weyerhaeuser's OSB (oriented strand board) mills—the first the company ever opened, back in 1982, and one of the first in the entire country.

Recently, Windemuller worked with Weyerhaeuser to install a series of crucial new dryer systems at the Grayling OSB plant. The dryers are an integral part of the OSB manufacturing process. OSB is formed by combining strands or flakes of wood with adhesives and then compressing those components together to create wooden boards. The finished OSB wood panels are ideal for load-bearing applications in construction, such as subflooring or sheathing for walls. Before the flakes can be used in manufacturing, though, they must pass through a dryer system to ensure that every single piece—large, small, thick, or thin—has the proper moisture content. Weyerhaeuser tasked Windemuller with installing and commissioning a new set of dryer systems.

CHALLENGES

Windemuller needed to put in four new dryers for Weyerhaeuser's OSB mill. Throughout the project, though, Weyerhaeuser wanted to keep the mill operating and producing as much as possible. As a result, Windemuller

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crews ended up doing significant preparation work while the existing dryer systems were still installed and running.

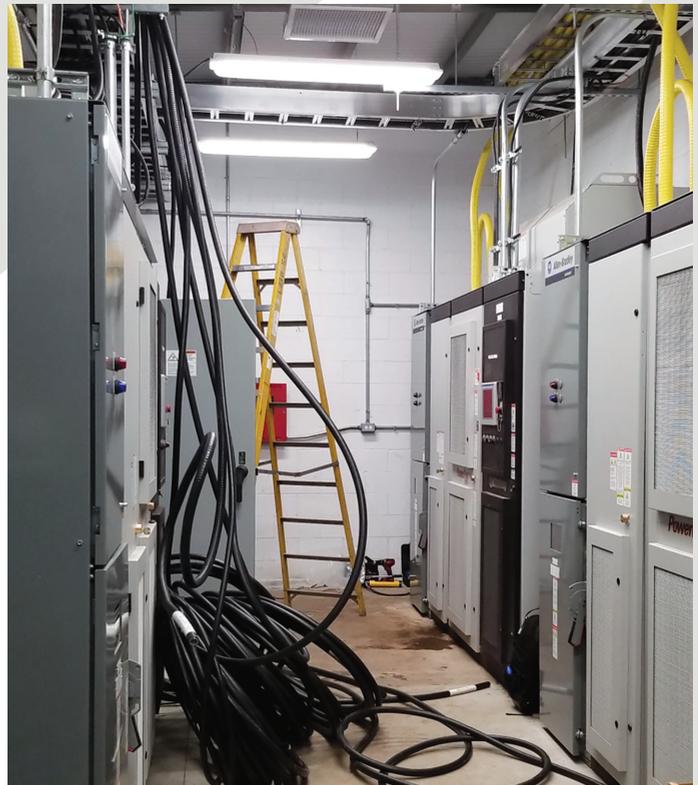
Another unique challenge was doing the testing for the systems as we were getting them installed. The bulk of the work for the project was done during an eight-week shutdown, at which point Weyerhaeuser worked with our general contractor to replace its aging OSB press. The shutdown gave our crews the leeway they needed to do their work, but it also made testing and commissioning the dryer systems more difficult. Since the new press wasn't in place yet, there was no spot for processed wood flakes to go. As a result, we needed to test the dryer systems without actually putting product through them.

SOLUTIONS

Windemuller worked with the client and the general contractor to put together a schedule that would work for all parties. Our teams did as much pre-work as possible, installing cable trays and pulling wire in a new 4160V motor control center (MCC) room. All this pre-work occurred while the existing MCCs were up and running and OSB production was in full swing. Once the eight-week shutdown period began, our crews were ready to uninstall the existing dryer equipment, bring in the new dryers, and hook them up to the cabling and wiring we'd already prepared.

Windemuller also strategized ways to dry test the new systems without running product through them. We paid close attention to each piece of equipment to ensure that it was fully operational and would work smoothly once the press was in place. Our role in the commissioning and testing process, as well as in the installation, allowed us to promptly troubleshoot any issues. Our constant on-the-ground presence made us agile, which in turn helped our team guarantee full customer satisfaction at the end of the project.

Weyerhaeuser prides itself on manufacturing high quality OSB boards, known for their flatness, stability, and ease of installation. Weyerhaeuser OSB doesn't warp, buckle, or sag, hence its popularity as a load-bearing component in many construction jobs. Windemuller needed to be cognizant of this impressive reputation. We had to make sure we were providing a solution worthy of Weyerhaeuser's brand. At the end of the day, the new dryer and press system we installed allow Weyerhaeuser to dry more flakes in less time, thereby expanding the amount of OSB the Grayling mill can produce on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. We are proud to say that our installation will deliver these capacity boosts without sacrificing the high standards and extreme quality control that has always defined this side of the Weyerhaeuser business.



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