

SENT TO LSU AGCENTER/LOUISIANA FOREST PRODUCTS DEVELOPMENT CENTER - FOREST SECTOR / FORESTY PRODUCTS INTEREST GROUP



THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Monday, September 23, 2019 Spokane, Washington Est. May 10, 1883

Katerra opens \$150 million manufacturing facility in Spokane Valley

Sat., Sept. 21, 2019, 5 a.m./By **Amy Edelen** amye@spokesman.com(509) 459-5581



Press operator Ricky Miller uses a layup press to glue and layer long and short boards together at Katerra, a cross-laminated timber factory that opened Friday in Spokane Valley. Katerra says the 270,000 square foot CLT facility is the largest in North America. (Colin Mulvany / The Spokesman-Review)

California-based Katerra has opened its \$150 million manufacturing plant in Spokane Valley where 100 workers are producing engineered wood products that could eventually replace concrete and steel in high-rise buildings.

The 270,000-square-foot factory opened Friday near Interstate 90 and Barker Road. The owners claim it is the largest cross-laminated timber and glulam facility in the United States.

Every year the workers at the factory can make product to build thousands of apartments and office buildings, according to the company. Once operating at full capacity, workers may be expected to produce up to 13 million square feet of material per year.

The products are made from wood scraps, which are compressed and glued together in layers that form structural panels and beams. The engineered wood products can be made from small diameter trees in Eastern Washington forests.

The timber used in Katerra's facility is currently sourced from Canada, but that is expected to change as wood becomes available in the state, said Craig Curtis, head of architecture for Katerra.

"Now it's up to the mills in Washington to be able to produce the material that we are looking for at the factory," he said. "We're not tied to any one particular source of lumber. We want whatever is best."



23 September 2019



SENT TO LSU AGCENTER/LOUISIANA FOREST PRODUCTS DEVELOPMENT CENTER - FOREST SECTOR / FORESTY PRODUCTS INTEREST GROUP

Avista’s Catalyst Building in the University District will be the first office building in the state constructed with cross-laminated timber made in Spokane Valley.

U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell visited the plant on Friday and lauded the jobs created and the the promise of using such new technology for construction. “So many people are going to realize this technology is going to be in demand,” she said at a Friday news conference. “It’s not only going to be in demand just right here, but in demand around the United States of America and that is why Spokane’s foresight, Spokane Valley’s foresight and the state of Washington’s foresight is so important.”

Cantwell introduced legislation in 2017 – which was later signed into law – to enable the U.S. Forest Service to issue 20-year contracts to mills and that has boosted production of cross-laminated timber. She also helped secure legislation in the 2018 Farm Bill to accelerate the research and development of cross-laminated timber for use in construction projects.

Gov. Jay Inslee, who was in Spokane on Friday, said the manufacturing facility is an example of using technology to solve social and environmental problems. “Those young people are demanding that we don’t destroy their future,” he said, referring to the youth at the Spokane Climate Strike. “So, separated by just a few miles, we have a young generation that is demanding to be saved from climate change and a somewhat older generation who is using their technological prowess, their entrepreneurial zeal and the incredible skill set that we have in working people in Washington state to give them not only solutions to climate change, but jobs for the future.”

Curtis said demand for the facility’s cross-laminated timber has been “off the charts.” “Virtually every one of our customers is interested in this material for the same reasons we are,” he said. “It’s just so new to North America, especially the U.S. It’s going to take a little while, but it will catch on and it will be a tidal wave.”

Richard P. Vlosky, Ph.D.
Director, Louisiana Forest Products Development Center
Crosby Land & Resources Endowed Professor of Forest Sector Business Development
Room 227, School of Renewable Natural Resources
Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803
Phone (office): (225) 578-4527; Fax: (225) 578-4251; Mobile Phone: (225) 223-1931
Web Site: www.LFPDC.lsu.edu

