

Expansion brings new construction method

SCHWIETERS BUILDS NEW HUGO FACILITY

As part of their efforts to create a new construction system for multifamily housing development, the owners of Schwieters Group of Cos. are creating a 130,000 square foot, three-building construction park in Hugo.

Joel and John Schwieters, two brothers in the rapidly growing family construction business, recently acquired 10 acres from the city located four miles north of White Bear Lake and one mile east of Interstate 35E. The company is operating out of its new 40,000 square foot headquarters on the second building, a 45,000 square foot facility for mill work and pre-finish construction operations.

The pre-finish work will be done by Painting Perfection, a Golden Valley company that is relocating into 15,000 square feet in the new building. The company will lease its space from Schwieters. The building is expected to be completed by the end of January 2001.

In early spring 2001, Schwieters plans to begin construction of the third and final building, a 45,000 square foot facility to house the company's pre-cutting operations; the building also will provide space for future expansion, Joel Schwieters says. In addition, Schwieters may decide to lease some of the space to other construction-related businesses, Joel says.

With the new buildings com-

pleted next year, Schwieters will have created a \$6 million construction park that brings all the trades together for building mostly townhomes and some single family homes. The park's operations will receive raw materials, direct them to the pre-finish and pre-cutting facilities, where the housing pieces will be prepared for a one-

it's kind of a natural next step for us," Joel says.

John Schwieters adds, "We will do 100 percent delivery of material to the site. Our product is labor, and by adding the material to that, we are in control of when the material gets there, and that's a savings in labor costs. It allows us to be more competitive, which is our ultimate goal."

Schwieters will be installing automated pre-cutting technology and equipment in its third building that will use computer software to layout and cut an entire structure, producing the pieces "like a jigsaw puzzle," John says. Using the new wywtem, the Schwieters hope to minimize as much wood cutting on site as possible.

"It's better than sending out wall and floor panels," John says. "There's less delivery costs and it's easier to package the material ... we want to improve people productivity in the field. Their time is so precious."

SB Commercial, Schwieters' general contracting company, is building the new facilities on the Hugo site. Joel says the site was acquired from the city using some company equity and through an agreement by Schwieters to do wetlands mitigation work. The wetland soil on the site will be replaced with fill and Schwieters will create a new wetland in nearby Centerville, Joel says.

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owner

Schwieters Group of Cos.

time delivery and installation by Schwieters' carpenters. It is a concept Joel became interested in about five years ago, and he believes it will be the first example of the method in Minnesota.

"To have the materials pre-finished, delivered and installed — it's done in other parts of the country; but