

Panolam starts up double-belt press



(Photo credit: Panolam)

The North American wood-based panel and laminate manufacturer Panolam Industries International Inc., based in Shelton, Connecticut, commissioned a new double-belt press in Auburn, Maine in July 2018. This is North America's first CPL press to make laminates. Up until now, Panolam has run three multi-opening presses at the site, which it integrated in 1999 when it acquired Pioneer Plastics Corp. Unconfirmed reports suggest that one of the three presses is to shut down after the double-belt press ramps up operations. Panolam had ordered the new press from Hymmen GmbH Maschinen- und Anlagenbau during the first quarter of 2017. Panolam sells its laminates under the Pionite and Nevamar brands. Its TFL panels are sold under the Panolam name. Panolam is also the brand name for other products made by the company, such as glass fibre-reinforced plastic, wall cladding and resins.

While Panolam's laminate operations have been modernised and expanded with the investment in a new double-belt press, it has carried out several divestments in its TFL business in recent years. Its laminating sites in Norcross, Georgia and Oshkosh, Wisconsin were closed, while a plant in Albany, Oregon that focuses on serving markets on the west coast of North America was sold to Arauco North America, based in Atlanta, Georgia, in July 2018. At the same time, Panolam and Arauco North America have agreed on a partnership under which Arauco North America will continue to make thermally fused laminates under the Panolam name with matching Panolam laminates at the Albany site.