

## Increasing Productivity at the Ripsaw

Although it may seem obvious, the three ways to improve production and efficiency on the gang ripsaw are to: keep the machine running at peak performance, reduce setup and changeover downtime, and improve raw material yield.



To maintain the machine's peak performance, daily maintenance is a must. Ripsaws covered in wood dust can result in chips re-cycling through the cutting chamber, leading to poor cut quality. Sawdust also can build in areas such as the feed bed and hold downs, affecting not only performance but increasing the potential for defects. Make sure to have the proper dust collection volume capacity and that all dust hoods are connected.

Also note that having a small inventory of critical replacement parts can reduce the potential for down time. In addition, fixed arbor saw owners should have at least one spare sleeve and spacer sets. Having two spare sleeves and tooling sets will allow for one prepared set-up and one in process for maintenance.

Another way to reduce potential downtime is to leave a dedicated saw sleeve for high use rips built up and ready for production. For example, assemble a wide capacity saw sleeve with rip pockets to accommodate the next two rip work orders.

Consider making a dedicated tooling station near the machine for the staging and building of saw sleeves. Stack or hang like-sized spacers to reduce potential handling damage and make finding the right spacer quick and easy.

High production shops with long production runs also might consider upgrading to tooling mist lubrication systems or diamond tooling for extended run times. These options are typically better suited for engineered material applications.

And even though gang rip saw changeovers are typically quicker than moulders, time also can be saved by having the tooling room prepare the next cut set-up, similar to that of the moulder operation.

### Increasing Yield

There is more to increasing rip operation efficiencies than productivity. Getting the most from your raw material is critical in today's competitive market.

One method is to pre-sort material prior to ripping. Operators too, should have specified and recognizable parameters for pulling a board out of production prior to ripping. Parameters such as maximum allowable crook, wane, wide clears and wide edgings are a few examples that can have a significant effect on your yield.

Rip optimizing systems, coupled with the correct saw for the application, can significantly improve yield and productivity, not only for large shops but small ones as well.



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