

# Post-frame maintenance

REPLACEMENT PRODUCT OFFERS LONG-TERM FIX

BY WAYNE WENZEL



**LEFT:** This rotted post was just 20 years old. **RIGHT:** The Perma-Column replacement keeps wood from contacting soil.

## **GOT AN OLDER** post-frame building?

It might be a good idea to dig alongside some of the posts to see how they are holding up. That's what members of the Huntington County Fair Board did on their 100- x 80-ft. post-frame show arena. The Indiana group was surprised to find that the building, which covers the area where farmers show their livestock, was on the verge of teetering over.

Tom Fulton, who serves on the fair board, recalls the discovery. "We found all the posts were nearly or completely rotted off below the ground," he says. "That much rot on treated wood was surprising on a building that is just 20 years old."

Replacing more than 40 posts on a building was a bigger job than fair volunteers wanted to tackle, so the board agreed to take bids on the project. "We got several quotes, all for about the same price," Fulton says. "Some were for burying wood posts in direct contact with the soil, but we didn't want to do a job where we knew the posts were likely to

rot in the ground again."

One of the bidders, Meyer Building Corporation, offered a more permanent repair solution, laminated posts attached to a concrete base, for less than \$10,000, or about \$250 per post for labor and materials. Fulton says, "Meyer did the job in a way that will last a lot longer than some similarly priced bids. After we did some work on the roof, it's like we have a new building now."

## **Perma-Columns**

The key to Meyer's winning bid was its Perma-Column posts. The product, first developed in the mid-1990s by Robert Meyer for new building construction, uses an innovative combination of high-strength, reinforced concrete, laminated wooden posts and mounting hardware that eliminates wood-to-soil contact. Last January, a Perma-Column product for new construction won a Farm Industry News FinOvation award by receiving more reader inquiries than any other new building product.

## **Repair posts**

Perma-Column Inc. customized the columns for repair projects at the request of several customers. One such request came from Steven Cramer of Findlay, OH, who wanted to replace the rotted posts on his shed and shop. "It was startling to see that the treated posts on my 22-year-old shed were 50 to 75% gone below the ground," Cramer says. "I decided that wood, even treated wood, buried in the earth is probably not a good idea. So I asked the Perma-Column people if their product could be adapted to my repair project. They made some prototypes that would suit my situation, some of which required bolting the columns to the concrete floor of the shop."

Perma-Column now manufactures pre-cast pads and hardware for repair jobs. Cost for one pad, post and hardware is less than \$60. For more information, contact Perma-Column Inc., Dept. FIN, 400 Carol Ann Lane, Ossian, IN 46777, 800/622-7190, visit [www.permacolumn.com](http://www.permacolumn.com) or [freeproductinfo.net/fin](mailto:freeproductinfo.net/fin), or circle 206.

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