



Concrete Plant International  
North America Edition



2 | 2025

www.cpi-worldwide.com

REPRINT | CONCRETE TECHNOLOGY

Northeast Precast invests in Quality,  
Improvement, and Culture





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# Northeast Precast invests in Quality, Improvement, and Culture

Northeast Precast (NEP) owner John Ruga won't hesitate to tell people his company creates excellent products, fully aware that almost every company makes the same claim. It's often an easy assertion to make when subjectivity determines quality, but Ruga believes his company goes beyond that cliché assertion, because it guarantees complete customer satisfaction regardless of circumstance. Knowing project-driven environments are subject to unforeseen challenges and change, NEP focuses on the customer. This focus has created a culture of teamwork, problem-solving, and communication. Simply put, NEP keeps working until the project is finished and finished correctly.

Reflected in the day-to-day operating behaviors at NEP is a mastery pursuit of ways to improve and innovate. Mr. Ruga learned that approach from his father years ago and now expects the same from his over 400 associates. "Always look to improve how the company makes precast solutions for commercial and residential projects, even if you've done the same thing countless other times," he tells his team of present-day

key managers which have been with the company since graduating school. These leaders in the organization were organically developed by adhering to a belief that "anybody who comes here can do anything they want if they work hard."

Over the years, this detailed focus on hard work, quality, and continuous improvement consecutively increased the regional demand for NEP's products and were in part reason for NEP outgrowing the production capacity at its Millville, New Jersey-USA facility. Needing to answer the call for greater capacity, the company responded by developing a second facility in neighboring Vineland, New Jersey, or more accurately described as, a Worldclass Precast Production campus!

## Starting from Scratch and Growing Fast

NEP manufactures columns, beams, trusses, double-tees, and wall panels for commercial clients. Its project list includes distribution centers for Amazon and UPS, parking structures, churches, office buildings, highway barriers, and other products for the Department of Transportation.



*Members of the Simem America team joined the Northeast Precast team for the ribbon-cutting ceremony!*



*Getting ready for the first batch! The Osprey and the Falcon (Simem Wetbeton 180S plants). Aggregate loading areas incorporate hydraulically operated lids to protect materials from weather.*

Its residential work (foundations, wall panels, floor planks) centers around an engineered wall product called Superior Walls. NEP (initially known simply as John Ruga Contractors) was the first licensed provider of Superior Walls in the state of New Jersey. The product propelled the company forward from its motivated aspirations in the early 2000s, to what it is today.

Styrofoam block forms to frame out foundations for the pouring of concrete on-site was the initial process used which resulted in a finished foundation every couple of weeks. But when John saw others in his area knocking out foundations quicker by using cranes, he decided something had to change. This observation led him to contact the Superior Walls team, which helped fuel expansion.

The simplicity and high quality of Superior Walls put the company on a fast growth track. Before long, the 50,000-square-foot production facility in Millville, NJ was fully supporting an increasing flow of residential building projects. But the good times did not last. The Great Recession of 2008 cut the operation's workforce in half. In hindsight, the slowdown "was a blessing," Ruga said as the downturn forced product diversification for the business. Agreements with the New Jersey DOT (Department of Transportation) plus newly developed relationships with light commercial clients soon generated growth and momentum for process improvement.

### Demonstrated Commitment to Partnership

A growing demand for products on commercial projects prompted NEP to develop a second production location. Opened in 2019, the Vineland, New Jersey campus constructed modern day fabrication and Precast manufacturing facilities. A Simem Eagle 7000 batch plant anchored an approximate 269,000-square-foot (25,000-square-meter) Precast manufacturing structure and a three-level office building. As demand for NEP's products continued to soar, another concrete batch plant was needed to support the growth trajectory NEP envisioned. The batch plant not only had to consistently deliver quality concrete, but it also had to fit NEP's drive to continuously improve and advance its production methods – a drive that aligns with the advice Daniel Ruga gave his son years ago. "He instilled in me: Don't believe anything is impossible. He would show me in five minutes of work, something could be done better," John Ruga recalled. The search for such a batch plant didn't last long, Mr. Ruga knew almost immediately that Simem would meet and even surpass expectations. For one, when touring Simem headquarters (Minerbe, Italy), Ruga was impressed with the company's many technologies and manufacturing expertise. Simem's 60+ years of experience in manufacturing and supplying concrete mixing and batching solutions to many of the largest concrete projects the World has seen, simplified an often over analyzed supplier selection process. "It was an easy decision," Ruga said. "You can see the quality in what they build and that all of their people know the business."

Ruga shared how years earlier, Simem demonstrated to him a level of customer satisfaction which resembled his own ap-



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FEATURED PLANT  
SIMEM - WETBETON 180S  
NEW JERSEY, USA





Full view of the two Simem Wetbeton WB180S plant (NEP named, the "Osprey" & Falcon")

proach with customers. At the Millville facility, where NEP installed a Simem Xentrix 2501 Countercurrent Planetary Mixer in 2017, Simem's handling of a bothersome issue was the moment when Ruga realized he had a partner which honored its promises, as NEP honored their promises with customers. "We ran into only one issue during the production process with the Xentrix mixer, and couldn't figure out the answer," recalls Ruga. "We contacted Simem and they put major effort into identifying the issue and even considered a design enhancement to resolve it. Simem invested money and time into an issue that was ultimately about us pushing a learning curve too fast," Ruga said. "They never billed us a dime for that and that's how I would treat a customer in the same situation." This was an important reason why we originally chose Simem to install the Eagle 7000 concrete batch plant at the new Vineland facility. "We know Simem stands behind its work, and we appreciate the value in that kind of commitment," Ruga stated.

### A Partner That Shares a Belief in Improvement

Since the original construction of the Vineland, New Jersey campus in 2019, NEP has continued to expand facilities and develop the grounds to keep pace with growth. Additional production and office buildings have been constructed. Gantry cranes, concrete trucks, and steel fabrication equipment have been put in place to support product production and manufacturing operations. The campus now features three concrete batching plants to satisfy the concrete demand for Precast products which serve an ever loyal, and still growing, customer base.

Notably, the most recent batch plant installation was celebrated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in December 2024. The grand opening of the campus's second Wetbeton WB180S plant (NEP named, the "Osprey") was an event to remember. Professionally organized by NEP associates, the full complement of traditional Italian fair of brick oven pizza, cannoli, espresso, and a small fleet of FIAT500s... one could not help but get caught up in the festivities!



Birdseye view of all three Simem plants at the Northeast Precast Vineland, New Jersey campus.

The "Osprey" matches its counterpart WB180S plant (NEP named, "Falcon") with 150 yd/hr. compacted concrete production output, 1,200-ton four bin aggregate storage with hot dipped galvanized steel construction, Simem@TIC 3.0 Control Automation, and shared 800 tons of cement storage. To serve their commercial clients, all three systems (Osprey, Falcon, Eagle) are fully insulated and enclosed for year-round concrete production. Truck dump aggregate loading areas incorporate hydraulically operated lids to protect materials from weather. All three plants share a Simem BetonWash used to separate aggregate from concrete truck wash water prior to having the wash water processed by the Simem WaterWash 2.0 filter press, which is used for the removal of fines from the slurry water prior to reintroduction, reuse, or conditioning before release.

"Because of Simem, NEP has greatly improved the efficiency of its concrete production processes, and it opens the doors to expand even further," Ruga said. The Simem plants confidently meet the facility's concrete demands while supporting the various precast product needs for projects across New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. Simem again met Ruga's high expectation of quality and his and his father's longstanding desire to always improve. "Because of our partnership with Simem, we feel we can be a trusted leader in the industrial market," Ruga said. "As we continue to grow, we know we have a partner to help us meet our commitment to excellence and absolute customer satisfaction." ■

### FURTHER INFORMATION



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