



R.P. Lumber Honored With Retail Beacon Award

by Submitted by R.P. Lumber
August 22 2023 2:23 PM



EDWARDSVILLE — R.P. Lumber Co. in Edwardsville, Ill., was honored as a Beacon Award winner during the Beacon Awards banquet held Friday, August 18. The Beacon Awards are a premier national industry awards program developed by *The Hardware Connection* magazine and The Hardware Conference to recognize the “best of the best” independent hardware/home improvement retailers in the United States.

The Beacon Awards are sponsored by Epicor Software Corp., Ettore Products Company, and Fluidmaster, with wholesaler sponsorship support from Orgill and other wholesalers.

“R.P. Lumber is very worthy of its inclusion in the 2023 class of Beacon honorees,” stated Chris Jensen, editor/founder/principal of *The Hardware Connection*, the hardware industry’s leading digital publication. “The Plummer family has a long tradition of giving back to the communities they serve.”

“We are truly honored to be the 2023 Retail Beacon nominee by Orgill,” said Jason Plummer, Vice-President of R.P. Lumber. “We are grateful to Orgill and to the entire team at *The Hardware Connection* and The Hardware Conference. Being named a Retail Beacon is truly an industry honor and reflects the hard work and commitment of our hundreds of great R.P. team members and our company’s many great vendors and partners,” he added.

What follows is an overview of R.P. Lumber:

R.P. Lumber Company was founded in 1977 by Robert and Donna Plummer in Staunton, Ill. A family-owned business, it operates over 80 full-service hardware and building material stores and two truss manufacturing facilities in five states.

In recent years, the company has been managing a steady growth strategy. “When an opportunity to open a new location or acquire an existing business comes our way, we typically look for small-to-medium sized communities similar to our current markets,” says Robert, who serves as president and CEO. “We are proud when we are able to save and create employment opportunities for local residents and look for markets that are relatively underserved in the hardware and building materials space.”

R.P. Lumber’s growth has made it even more dedicated to its mission and values as a family-owned and operated company, led by Robert and Donna Plummer along with their three children: Julie, Jennifer, and Jason, who are all involved in the business.

Each retail location is a full-service home center and building materials supplier that offers lumber, kitchen cabinets, paint, windows, doors, hardware, plumbing, electrical, drywall, roofing supplies, tools, and much more. Serving both DIYers and contractors, R.P. Lumber provides full-service delivery, kitchen cabinet design, deck design, and blueprint takeoffs.

“We keep our organization chart pretty flat and work hard to empower our team members. People are key to our industry. We want to be a place where people are proud to work,” says Jason, who wears many hats in his role as vice president. In addition,

Jason was elected to the Illinois state senate in 2018 and serves as the assistant leader in the Illinois Republican Senate Caucus. He also serves on the board as president of the Illinois Lumber and Material Dealers Association.

R.P. Lumber's team members deliver on the company's "Best Service. Best Value." promise with every customer they serve. The operation prides itself on service, product quality and pricing while driving value for its customers through a combination of those three components.

"We have to invest in the knowledge, inventory and equipment to make our largest, most sophisticated customers pleased with R.P. Lumber, while also making sure that the DIYer coming in for a roll of duct tape has a phenomenal experience," says Jason.

R.P. Lumber has invested in technology to improve operational efficiencies and drive traffic online. The company offers a robust e-commerce platform and is constantly investing in and upgrading its IT operations to obtain more data and leverage that data to better serve customers and strengthen the company.

In 2022, the company upgraded its Epicor POS system across all locations. "We feel that our new software platform from Epicor will make us better from a service, logistics, training, and business intelligence standpoint," said Jason. "It was a significant investment and a very large project, but we have to invest in the business to provide great service and be a good partner to our customers," he added.

"We have a lot of great vendors and partners, and Orgill is right there at the top in every way I can think of. They are flexible, creative, and bring solutions to us that we may not have even thought about yet. I truly feel like they are committed to our business and everyone on their team is approachable and engaged," says Jason. "Orgill understands our business, and they are very hands-on and forward thinking in helping us implement ideas and changes necessary to successfully compete in what we all know is a tough industry," he continued.

The company has remodeled six locations this year, focusing on a better retail consumer experience, and has added over 250,000 square feet of warehouse space across all stores in the last 12 months. R.P. Lumber is rolling out new kitchen and deck design programs at dozens of store locations in 2023 and 2024.

In all communities where R.P. Lumber has stores, it shows its support continually by investing in local organizations such as law enforcement, youth sports, churches, and many other causes. "We have been blessed, and we always want to give back," explains Robert.

It was a recent major contributor to the R.P. Lumber Center, a recreational complex located in Edwardsville, Ill., that offers its residents and the surrounding communities a year-round destination for fitness and congregating with its ice rink, fitness center, and track. The facility, which serves thousands of families in the St. Louis area, also includes a teen center and private rooms for meetings and celebrations.

The company also helped fund the all-ages Plummer Family Sports Park, an 83-acre tournament-quality facility featuring lighted, full-synthetic turf baseball and softball fields, pickleball courts, and nine full-size multisport fields for soccer, football, rugby, lacrosse, and more.

In March, R.P. Lumber was honored as the 2022 Large Business of The Year by the city of Edwardsville. Robert and Donna accepted the award from the mayor. “It’s always nice to be recognized for our contributions to the communities we serve,” says Robert.

“The recognition is truly an honor, and it is humbling. We have hundreds of hardworking, caring team members and we have thousands of great partners and customers. This is an award that reflects that hard work and those relationships,” added Jason.