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Hilltop Lumber's new showroom includes a 384-square-foot "idea house" that allows customers to see different types of shingles, siding, windows and doors.

Ottertail Hilltop lumber store holds grand opening

By Kim Brasel

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Gleaming, mineral-washed granite countertops, 10 different kitchen cabinetry displays, a 384-square-foot idea house, and over 9,000 square feet of showroom space all greeted customers as they entered the new Hilltop Lumber store in Ottertail at its grand opening last week.

Brian Klimek, general manager of the Ottertail store, said the changes were made based on customer feedback and demand. "People want to be able to see products before they buy them, not just pick them out of a catalog, and this new space gives them that opportunity."

One way shoppers can get ideas is through the "idea house", a 384-square-foot structure that will have siding, shingles, doors, windows, and everything else on it for customers to see up close when picking out what they need when building or remodeling a house.



Milwaukee Tools set up an outdoor display at Hilltop Lumber's grand opening for the newly expanded Ottertail store Aug. 11-12.

Feedback has been positive, with some surprises. Most people have been surprised at how big the store is and that instead of it looking like a traditional hardware store it's much more modern.

Dan and Sheila Keskitalo said they were surprised and they like the wide variety of displays. "We are thinking about building and stopped by the open house to get ideas and look around,"

they said.

Hilltop Lumber is a family-owned business with its first store opening in Glenwood in 1988. Since that time, it's expanded to locations in Alexandria, Parkers Prairie, Brandon and to Ottertail in 2014.

When Hilltop opened the store in 2014 Klimek said they already knew at that time expanding would be necessary because their other stores

have big showrooms, and they wanted to add that to the Ottertail facility plus increase the selection in other areas.

"Expanding the hardware section means customers don't have to leave town to find what they need," Klimek said. "I think adding a store like this with all it has to offer shows that the company is committed to the community and growth in the area."