

CASE STUDY

Oil & Gas



Project Specs

Location: Tamaulipas, Mexico

Application: Maintenance Platforms for Oil Refinery Reactor

Product: Safe-T-Span® Pultruded Phenolic Grating

Overview

Founded in 1914 in Madero, Tamaulipas, Mexico, this facility was rated the top producer of gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel in the country in 2020 and is one of the most important oil refineries in the country.



Problem

The maintenance team was looking for a material to replace the steel floor on the facility reactor service platforms. The customer had to continually replace the metal gratings due to the corrosive, salty air from the nearby Gulf of Mexico. The reactor was over 200 feet tall, so disassembling and carrying the metal gratings every time the reactor was serviced would be a difficult and unpractical task. In addition, the maintenance staff could not use any method that involved fire or even create a spark, such as welding, to reinstall the grating because it could cause a fire in the reactor.



The bidding for this project was a long and rigorous process that involved several Mexican competitors. The customer looked for a product that offered corrosion resistance, was low maintenance, was lightweight, and had a long service life. They were also looking for a personalized customer service experience. The winner of the bid had to provide images with updates on the order's progress, and if necessary, allow the customer to visit the manufacturing plant where the product would be made.



Solution

Fibergrate won the bidding and supplied over 11,840 square feet of Safe-T-Span® pultruded phenolic grating for the platforms. FRP (fiberglass reinforced plastic) phenolic grating can withstand high temperatures and direct contact with flames while maintaining its structural integrity, an important feature for the reactor platforms. This grating was easy and safe to install and required no welding or hot work. The flooring on these platforms can withstand the highly corrosive salt air environment, allowing for a long service life. Contractors working on different projects within the facility during the installation asked the Fibergrate territory manager if there were any remaining grating pieces to use on their projects because they were impressed by the quality and benefits of FRP. Once the grating was installed, the customer's internal project evaluation commission inspected the application, and they rated the project as excellent.

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