

CASE STUDY

Food & Beverage



Project Specs

Location: Leelanau Cellars - Omena, Michigan
Application: FRP Stairway and Platform to Access Wine Tanks
Product: Corvex Molded Grating, Fibertred® Molded Stair Treads, ISOFR Dynaform® Structural Shapes, Dynarail® Guardrail

Overview

Leelanau Cellars, a family-owned winery in northern Michigan, wanted to create an easy and safe way for their production workers to access the large wine tanks in the facility. The goal was to create a structure that could improve the employees' safety and increase productivity by facilitating access to the hatches on top of the wine tanks.

Problem

The staff was using ladders to climb to the top of the wine tanks while carrying full buckets. Because of the height of the tanks and the fact that the floor was usually wet, the new access to the wine tanks needed to use materials that provided a slip resistant surface. Wineries use different substances in their production process that corrode traditional materials such as steel. In addition, these facilities have to be cleaned with chemicals and water multiple times a day, so it was important that the materials chosen were corrosion resistant.

Solution

Leelanau Cellars makes its employees' safety a priority. While working with their local Fibergrate territory manager, they determined that a staircase connected to a platform was needed, so the workers could walk on and carry the necessary materials to work with the beverages in the tanks safely. The materials used for this project were Fibertred molded treads for the steps on the staircase, Dynarail for the handrail, and Dynaform Structural Shapes with Fibergrate molded grating walkway for the platform. This application not only helped increase the safety of the production workers, but it covered the main concerns of the client:



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- **Corrosion Resistant** - Fibergrate's fiberglass reinforced plastic (FRP) products are known for their ability to provide corrosion resistance in the harshest environments and chemical exposures. For this project, the Fibergrate representative suggested isophthalic polyester resin formulation (ISOFR/Corvex) for the platform. This is a resin system specifically designed for environments where there is moderate exposure to corrosive elements.
- **Slip Resistant** - Fibergrate's molded grating and molded treads provide superior, slip resistant footing in wet and oily environments found in the food and beverage industry.
- **Easy to Clean** - Fibergrate products can have a nonporous surface, so they can be easily cleaned with a high-pressure washer as often as needed without having to worry about the materials getting corroded for not being 100% dry as you would have to with metal at a winery.

This structure is a secure, safe, and easy way for employees to access the wine tanks. Additionally, the anticorrosive properties of the FRP materials ensure the integrity of the platform. After the project was completed, Fibergrate's territory manager followed up with Leelanau Cellars, and they were extremely satisfied with the result. This structure is extremely functional and can be used as a showpiece for their visitors.



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