

Meat and poultry processing plants have among the harshest environments of any industry. The need for powerful and continuous wash down and sanitation cycles plus the constant movement of in-plant vehicles and large material loads can take a toll on any plant wall if they aren't adequately protected. Thanks to Zer-O-Loc's FRP (fiberglass reinforced plastic), which is factory-applied to the metal skins of the EPS (expanded polystyrene) insulated panels, protection from corrosive elements plus scratch and dent resistance in heavy-traffic areas is maximized.

Corrosion protection

New cleaning and sanitizing chemicals are getting harsher because processors want their processing facilities cleaner, explains Lee Hawkins, Zer-O-Loc Account



Manager. Standard and traditional painted walls and ceilings cannot offer the maximum protection in such environments.

"In some instances, paint manufacturers do not warranty their paint in federally inspected plants, such as food plants," Hawkins adds. "In some areas of the plant that may have heavy wash-down or corrosive elements in the atmosphere,

salt or other corrosive ingredients could damage the paint by causing it to pit or corrode to a point where the paint starts peeling off the galvanized skin. If this happens, the production area may be subject to shut down until the area is refinished."

Hawkins recommends that processors who are building new plants take a proactive stance by having their wall panels treated with FRP for maximum protection. Basically, Zer-O-Loc factory-applies the FRP onto the new panels. As the panels go through a heat process, it immediately bonds the .090-inch thick FRP to each panel. FRP is available in either a pebbled or smooth white finish.

Zer-O-Loc approaches solution recommendations on a case-by-case basis.

"We prefer to see what the project is first and then propose what we think would be the best solution [prior to construction]," Hawkins says. "For example, if the planned room is going to be a cutting or blending room, we recommend to our customer that this is going to be a heavy wash-down room exposed to corrosive elements and would recommend using fiberglass reinforced plastic on the surface of the metal wall."

Typical height of Zer-O-Loc factory laminated FRP ranges from a recommended minimum of four-feet high from floor or curb to the full height of the panel. For those rooms exposed to extreme wash-down environments, FRP may also be applied to the ceiling panels.

If an existing room in the plant needs to be FRP-treated, this can also be done.

"The FRP treatment is truly unique," Hawkins says. "We are the only panel manufacturer that offers such a product."

Satisfied customers

Customers who incorporated FRP on their wall panels or ceilings are very pleased with it. One such customer is Waterloo, Ontario-based Piller Sausages and Delicatessens Ltd., processor of sausages, luncheon meat, salami, liverspreads, ham, poultry, and beef products.

"We go back a long way with Zer-O-Loc," says Willy Huber Jr., President of Piller Sausages and Delicatessens Ltd. "We're one of their first customers. We have

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A powerful solution

Zer-O-Loc, North America's leading EPS insulated panel manufacturer, adds durability and safety features to processing plant walls and ceilings with its FRP (fiberglass reinforced plastic).

been using their FRP product for all of our construction needs, and we currently operate four plants. We use FRP everywhere—including packaging rooms, ceilings, and processing areas.”

Several FRP product features are particularly important to Huber.



This is what can happen if FRP is not used.



Finished product with FRP

FACTORY APPLIED FRP

- Applied to metal panel skins for increased scratch and dent resistance in high-traffic areas
- Designed to withstand incidental contact with FRP panel surface and the harsh conditions associated with high wash-down areas
- Factory applied under controlled conditions to ensure the strongest bond available

“First of all, it’s easy to clean,” he says.

“Nothing sticks to its rippled surface so it’s easy to wash. And the way the material is installed is second to none. All joints are caulked prior to putting everything together. Then the panels are sandwiched together and are caulked again so you don’t have mold or bacteria growing behind the panel. We even do our ceilings with FRP now.”

FRP’s resiliency is another plus

“If someone scratches a painted surface, you will eventually have issues with it,” Huber says.

“We’ve found FRP to be the best. It’s impact resistant. And because of the brightness of FRP, you can reduce the amount of lighting wattage in an FRP-treated room.”

Looking to the future, Huber will maintain his long-standing partnership with Zer-O-Loc.

“Zer-O-Loc has done a number of huge projects for us over the years,” Huber says. “I keep using them over and over again. I’m happy with Zer-O-Loc. I just finalized a new plant in Brantford, Ontario, Canada, near our head office, and it too is constructed with FRP. I wouldn’t build another facility without it.”

Another satisfied FRP customer is Frito-Lay, the convenient foods division of Purchase, NY-based PepsiCo. Frito-Lay offers a wide variety of fun foods and snacks ranging from potato chips and corn chips to pretzels and cookies.

Several years ago, Frito-Lay incorporated FRP in the corn-cook area of its Wooster, OH, processing plant, which manufactures corn and potato chips. Cory Gardner, Project Engineer at Frito-Lay’s Wooster, OH, plant, likes several things about FRP.

“It’s an easy-to-clean product that is also an approved material by our insurance company,” he says. “And from my standpoint, FRP is easy to install. Zer-O-Loc has been easy to work with, plus they delivered our materials on time.”

If you’re planning to construct a new processing plant, upgrade an existing facility, or would like more information on the FRP process, please send us an e-mail or visit our web site. **NP**

E-mail: sales@zeroloc.com or visit www.zeroloc.com