

Case Study

Schweibert Riverfront Park



Details

Location: Rock Island, IL

Description: 5,400-square-feet of Carnival Ultra

Project Needs

Soft, safe surface for children to play
Easy to repair and/or replace, as needed
Wide variety of pattern and color options
Durability

Project Benefits

Attractive
Durable
Eco-logical

PlayGuard Stands Up To Parks Heavy Use



There are two play areas at the Schwiebert Riverfront Park, located on the Mississippi Riverfront in Rock Island, Ill.. One is designated for children 5-years-old and under, and the other is for children age 6 and older. Both are extremely popular.

“It’s not unusual for us to have 200-300 people on the playground throughout the day every day, and there are days when there are more than that,” said William Nelson, Executive Director with Rock Island Park & Recreation.

The playgrounds at Schwiebert Riverfront Park are also electronic, so the manufacturer can track which areas of the park are most popular. “They actually have the ability to track how many games are played and how many calories are burned by playing the game,” said Nelson. “Last year they did a reading on Schwiebert Park and how many games were played, and we had more games played in that park than in Philadelphia, New York City, or North Orleans. We had more games played there than any other installation in North America! We are getting tremendous use.”

Thankfully, Nelson and others in the Rock Island Park and Recreation Department thought this might be the case. As a result, they were very selective when determining which playground surfacing to install while the park was being constructed.

“We looked at several different materials,” said Nelson. “We bent them, rubbed them, scrapped them, and really beat the stuff up, trying to figure out the best solution for us. We selected PlayGuard, because we felt strongly that it was going to survive much better than other material.”

Manufactured in the U.S.A. by Ecore, a company that transforms reclaimed waste into performance surfaces, PlayGuard tiles are made from performance rubber and are designed to reduce the risk of serious injury associated with falls from playground equipment. Any design inspiration or playful color scheme can be implemented with PlayGuard’s custom color and logo capabilities.

Initially, the Rock Island Park and Recreation Department was thinking about using a poured-in-place surface. “We had seen a number of the poured-in-place ones,” said Nelson. “But our experience with all the places we visited that had this type of surfacing was that they were getting worn out very quickly, specifically, in the high-use areas. Our expectation for Schwiebert was that it was going to be a very high-use park. We wanted something that had a little more resiliency to it.”

There are many benefits to using PlayGuard vs. a Poured-in-Place playground surface:

- Installation is easier; Poured-in-Place must be mixed, leveled and finished on site by a trained professional
- 15-year warranty; Poured-in-Place surfaces average a 3.5-year warranty
- High-traffic areas resist deterioration
- Vandalized or damaged areas can be easily fixed
- Inconsistencies in installation do not affect critical fall height ratings
- Fade resistant
- Suitable for rooftop installations

“What we really liked about PlayGuard was, number one, it had the squares we could interchange if we needed to,” said Nelson. “Two, we could do some checker-boarding type patterns with it. It has a motif to it that matches some other checkerboard color schemes throughout the park.”

In addition to being easy to repair and replace, PlayGuard is also simple to clean, requiring virtually no maintenance.

“We are pretty happy with it,” said Nelson.

“And, with the type of use that we are getting, frankly, we feel like we have already had 6-8 years of use out of the playground, even though it’s only been installed two years! The amount of use down there is just incredible.”