



Galaxy Wheel at Galveston Island's Pleasure Pier

Galveston, Texas



In the year 2000, when Landry's, Inc. purchased the Pleasure Pier in Galveston, Texas, hurricanes had left the park in shambles. When the time came to begin planning for renovations, the owners and designers were well aware of the harsh conditions the amusement park would encounter during its life-cycle. Among 16 major attractions, the Galaxy Wheel lies at the southern-most end of the pier, overlooking the Gulf of Mexico. The Galaxy Wheel is a 90-foot-high Ferris Wheel that can accommodate up to 160 children at a time.

Because of its location, as well as the obvious concern for rider safety, a duplex coating system of hot-dip galvanizing and paint was specified to protect the structure from the harsh marine environment of the Gulf Coast Region. If paint alone were used on the Galaxy Wheel, maintenance costs would be much higher, especially considering the rapid rate at which steel corrodes in coastal locations. Repainting the wheel would involve not only the direct labor and material costs, but also high shutdown costs as the ride would be out of commission. The synergistic effect of a duplex coating system will minimize the frequency at which these costs are incurred.

The high level of complexity of the wheel required a reliable and accessible line of communication be established among the designer, fabricator and galvanizer to ensure on-time delivery and high quality. The Galaxy Wheel is a large and complex structure with many parts very similar in design, and every piece of steel on the ride was galvanized. A strict inventory was maintained to ensure the parts were not delivered out of sequence, which would cause delays in painting and construction.

The Galaxy Wheel is a definite eye-catcher for Pleasure Pier, and its final appearance is a key element for the attraction. The utilization of a duplex coating system allowed the designers to choose the desired color scheme to highlight the ride while also benefitting from the protective qualities of the galvanized coating. These factors provide a clear competitive edge over a paint-only coating and will result in less down-time due to maintenance requirements, as well as increased rider safety due to the preservation of the structural integrity of the steel components.

The Pleasure Pier was originally built as a recreational facility for the U.S. military during World War II. At that time, it was the largest amusement facility in the nation and was dubbed "The Coney Island of the South." The pier was all but destroyed over the years by the harsh, salty sea-air and vicious tropical storms. After the purchase by Landry's, the vision has finally come to fruition with the completion of the renovations. The pier is now highlighted by the Galaxy Wheel – a 90-foot Ferris Wheel at the southern end of the pier that ignites the Gulf Coast horizon with over 6,000 multi-colored incandescent lights. Local inhabitants of the Galveston area as well as thousands of tourists will enjoy the ride each year, and hot-dip galvanizing played a significant role in making that possible in a safe, cost-effective manner.



Galvanizer
AZZ Galvanizing - Chelsea

Owner
Landry's Pleasure Pier

Engineer
Chance Rides

duplex systems