

# Asphalt Manufacturer Gets Rapid-Response Safety Upgrade

When the crux of your business revolves around 20-hour days spent loading and unloading asphalt into and out of trucks, safety is a primary concern. And when you're relying on 20-year-old shop-built loading racks for these crucial functions, it's probably time for an upgrade. That was the reality for Premier Modified Asphalt (formerly known as Premier Emulsions), a Phoenix, AZ-based asphalt-emulsion and asphalt-rubber manufacturer. A typical day at Premier involves receiving as many as 15 truckloads a day of virgin asphalt and other raw materials, blending it and shipping the resulting asphalt rubber out to asphalt hot plants. On the emulsion side of the business, different formulations of asphalt emulsions are manufactured for use in various projects on an as-needed basis.

Knowing he had to find a loading/unloading-rack fall-protection solution as quickly as possible, Leroy Gleaves, the plant manager at Premier Modified Asphalt, did what most enterprising people are doing these days: he turned to the Internet, and there he found the answer to his predicament in Sumter, SC-based SafeRack.

"We were bottom-loading the trucks, which is a very, very dangerous proposition with hot asphalt," Gleaves explained. "I wanted to get a replacement as soon as I could. I had gotten the approval to purchase new fall-protection equipment, came upon SafeRack, filled out the information form online and (Sales Representative) John Bast called me the next day."

In fact, Bast not only called, he came to the Premier Modified Asphalt plant the next day armed with a full-scale demonstration model of SafeRack's G4 Series Gangway System.

What Gleaves saw was a SafeRack G4 Series Self-Adjusting Stair (SAS) Gangway that would fill Premier Modified Asphalt's loading-rack needs. The SAS model incorporates stair treads that articulate and self-level to accommodate the varying heights of vehicles, a crucial consideration at the Premier Modified Asphalt facility. The gangways are also constructed using metal-stamping technology and a tool-and-die process to cut out pieces of aluminum, which are then bent into the required shape, eliminating the need for as many welds and creating a stronger, more durable gangway. Other features of the G4 Series equipment include spring-loaded gangway and platform operation, slip-resistant tread on the stairs, safety orange handrails and mid-rails, heavy-duty bumpers and four-rail design for maximum fall protection.

Not only did Gleaves get a first-hand look at the G4 Series demo model and how it could enhance Premier Modified Asphalt's loading-rack fall-protection, but by the end of that day Bast was able to provide Gleaves with a quote for the project, along

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with approval drawings and schematics for the new concrete base that would need to be poured in order to accommodate the G4 rack. Another consideration was Premier Modified Asphalt's desire to use an existing asphalt loading arm with the new SafeRack equipment. To meet that desire, Bast determined how the loading arm could be re-dimensioned and put in a particular location in relation to the gangway so that the equipment could work together without interference.

Bast also told Gleaves that he could have the system delivered and installed in four to six weeks. When Gleaves asked if there was any chance it could be done sooner, Bast, with the help of SafeRack owners Rob Honeycutt and Fred Harmon, went into overdrive to ensure that the needs of Gleaves and Premier Modified Asphalt were met in half that time.

While the rack was en route, Gleaves, working with the approval drawings that Bast had created, had the concrete foundation installed, as well as the plumbing that would run to the rack, so that when the rack arrived the area would be ready for installation. In the end, a process that began in late July was completed just two weeks later on Aug. 10.

"It took only two weeks to order it and have it installed—that's pretty fast," boasted Gleaves. "It has worked out better than I had hoped. When John was able to pull some strings and make some agreements to get it on that truck coming to Phoenix, I was pretty impressed."

Since the loading rack with the SafeRack G4 Series Self-Adjusting Stair (SAS) Gangway has been in place Gleaves admires the easy operation.

"I needed good equipment that's not going to require a lot of maintenance. The SafeRack gangways have operated flawlessly. The operators love them and we have significantly upgraded the safety aspect of loading and unloading these asphalt trucks thanks to our new SafeRack equipment," said Gleaves.

*SafeRack, LLC has experience in offering the food/pharmaceutical, specialized chemical, pulp and paper, building products, plastics, cement, mining, petroleum, biodiesel and ethanol industries high-quality equipment that has been customized for each customer's unique loading applications. For more information, please visit [www.saferack.com](http://www.saferack.com) [1].*

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