



PFLOW D SERIES HELPS REPURPOSE OLD RESTAURANT BUILDING INTO GOVERNMENT SERVICE FACILITY

GOVERNMENT | DOVER, DE

Renovating and repurposing older buildings is a common practice in urban renewal. Often referred to as “adaptive reuse,” it is an effective means to conserve existing assets and reduce urban sprawl.

A prime example of adaptive reuse is the renovation of an old restaurant building in downtown Dover, recently repurposed to house the Delaware E-ZPass Customer Service Center and Division of Motor Vehicles Call Center.

The process of transforming over 10,000 sq ft of space from a restaurant to a government service facility was all-encompassing. In addition to an overhauled layout, new furnishings and the requisite code upgrades, storage for an ample supply of electronic toll transponder boxes, office products and customer paperwork was required.

Upgrading space in the antiquated basement was the obvious storage solution, but the rickety stairs were an inadequate and non-compliant means of access. In effort to find a safe, reliable and economic solution the project general contractor, Whiting-Turner Contracting, called Delaware Elevator (DE) of Salisbury, MD.

“The space in the basement was pretty tight, so we knew the best solution would be something mechanically simple, easy to install and low maintenance.”

PJ Laviola,
GM for Special Applications,
Delaware Elevator

After completing our site study and determining the relatively low number of payloads E-ZPass required, we recommended a PFlow D Series hydraulic lift.

Whiting Turner and DE then collaborated with E-ZPass to find the optimal spot for the thru-floor VRC, agreeing to a location against the back wall away from customer traffic.

PFlow D Series hydraulic lifts are designed for loads up to 3,000 lb., carriage platform dimensions up to 6' x 6', and vertical rises up to 15', all within the parameters of the E-ZPass spec.

Hydraulic lifts are also better for tight spaces, with no overhead clearance needed for the motor and mechanicals above the hoistway, as is typically required for larger VRC models. This also provides an advantage for maintenance and code compliance.

“With Hydraulic lifts you can position the pump and controller wherever you want, so you can work on it at knee level rather than having to climb a ladder to access the mechanicals,” said Bo McShane, DE site supervisor who managed the E-ZPass installation. “And you can avoid the OSHA approved safety and accessibility add-ons, like stairs, catwalks and handrails often required with lifts where the primary mechanicals are at the top.”

The E-ZPass D Series is a cantilevered frame design, with all structural elements attached to one basement wall, forming an L-shaped configuration with the lift carriage. The hydraulic pump and controller are stack-mounted adjacent to the lift, with a flexible hose connected to the two 2" ram direct-acting hydraulic cylinders that lower and raise the lift.

The hydraulic lift includes advanced safety features to protect workers and materials, such as:

Access gates at each level with interlocks to sync with the movement and position of the lift carriage.

Velocity fuses to prevent uncontrolled carriage descent in the unlikely event of a hydraulic hose rupture.

A pressure switch to prevent the carriage from drifting or sinking to ensure smoother, safer loading and unloading.

A Remote-Mounted Control Pane

Added Laviola, “The lift was installed and fully tested in only three days. We prefer to work with PFlow because they are the industry leader and there are never any surprises when the lift components arrive on site.”

The facility, which opened in March 2014, employs 85 people and serves 1,000 people a month. Regarded as the most extensive economic development project in Dover in many years, the project brings a steady flow of people to the site, benefiting area merchants and helping fuel growth downtown.

The PFlow D Series hydraulic lift certainly played a role of making this adaptive reuse project a reality.

