

BUCKINGHAM FOUNTAIN



CHALLENGE:

The Clarence F. Buckingham Memorial Fountain is the centerpiece of Grant Park in Chicago, Illinois. The iconic water fountain is an 82-year-old landmark that draws many visitors around the world as it is recognized as being the world's largest decorative fountain. When the Chicago Park District (CPD) and the Art Institute of Chicago decided the fountain and surrounding pavement needed extensive renovations, stormwater detention and the original ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) compliance was vital to the design. The previous surface was a decomposed granite/pea gravel system that worked for decades, but it did not meet ADA guidelines. The installation of pavers makes for a safer and smoother surface for pedestrians and those with disabilities.

INFLUENCE:

The CPD provided the landscape architect team with multiple regulatory guidelines to work with such as: pavers must satisfy federal guidelines for ADA accessibility requirements; they must match the original fountain paving color and appearance to help maintain the historic look of the fountain; and they must satisfy stormwater management requirements without the need

LOCATION:

Chicago, Illinois

DESIGNER:

Thompson Dyke & Associates

INSTALLER:

LPS Paving

PRODUCT:

Eco-Priora™



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for additional water storage in surface basins or underground chambers to help keep the project on budget. Additionally, the permeable pavers must be able to handle occasional heavy vehicular loads.

SOLUTION:

In line with the City's clear-cut agenda, project designer, Thompson Dyke & Associates, thoughtfully selected Eco-Priora permeable concrete pavers to fit project requirements.

This versatile and permeable unit paver is designed with special spacer bars that feature a 7mm gap which is filled with a clear, fine stone chip, allowing for rapid penetration of rainwater into the sub-base and subsoil therefore meeting the green system requirements. [Eco-Priora](#) is not only permeable but is also a heavy-duty product that can handle a pedestrian environment like this one. The permeable paver will also support heavier loads from large vehicles that use the area for events such as Lollapalooza and the Taste of Chicago.

Matching the color to the original hardscape was one of challenges for the Buckingham Fountain project. In doing so, a custom color was selected to closely resemble the gravel color. A [Series](#) finish was added - an exposed aggregate that combines granite and quartz. When laying out the pavers, [Eco-Priora](#) was utilized in all three shapes to visually portray the fountain's old-heritage style.

With this renovation, the Buckingham Fountain has met the Chicago Department of Water Management's 2008 ordinance for stormwater management requirements. Unilock has seen an increased demand for permeable pavers in years because of their environmental friendliness and efficiencies with stormwater runoff.

Currently, there are more than 3 million sq. ft. (68.8 acres) of permeable pavers in the Chicago area, mostly in parking lots. The Chicago Park District's use of permeable pavers at Buckingham Fountain has set a new standard for pedestrian plazas and walks in North America.

