



Vat's How It's Done

When Sonoma Cast Stone realized a new product idea demanded a mold above and beyond industrial standards, they reached out to Norwalk Precast Molds eager to find a supplier to give them a fresh perspective on their mold designs. With a focus on meeting strict dimensional tolerances while maintaining an architectural grade appearance, Norwalk Precast Molds welcomed the opportunity.

Background Information

In 1996 while building his home, Steven Rosenblatt, founder and CEO of Sonoma Cast Stone, developed a unique collection of pavers using a proprietary concrete mixture. He received multiple inquiries from architects and interior designers on how they could acquire similar pavers for their clients. Rosenblatt realized he had a new business opportunity sitting right in front of him. Over time, Rosenblatt expanded his product line which enabled him to land multiple contracts with upscale commercial contractors. This facilitated the establishment of Sonoma Cast Stone in Petaluma, California, 32 miles north of San Francisco in 2004. This region of California is known as the Sonoma Valley wine country.



It is home to more than 600 businesses and 65 historical properties. Petaluma's character, energy and location are a few of the reasons why Rosenblatt decided to call it home for Sonoma Cast Stone. Once settled in wine country, Sonoma realized that many of the local wineries were purchasing concrete egg-shaped fermentation tanks shipped from France. They discovered that concrete tanks were becoming fashionable again and offered various benefits over oak and stainless steel. Concrete provides thick, porous, temperature stabilizing walls that help soften the texture of wine. Most tanks are sold unlined to insure the benefits of micro-oxygenation and to give wine the subtle minerality that makes concrete popular. Concrete tanks are also customizable in design, shape and size and are much more affordable than barrels. As a result, Sonoma Cast Stone responded by developing their own high quality designs that caught the attention of many local wine and beer makers. As the requests began rolling in, Sonoma started engineering ideas on alternative shapes and sizes to fulfill their customers' needs.

Sonoma's Requirements

After realizing their customers' needs expanded beyond the standard egg-shaped concept, Sonoma Cast Stone began to heavily invest in research and development strategies. This generated the creation of new technologies, designs and patented concrete formulations



including NuCrete™, MetalCrete™, Sonoma Light™ and EarthCrete™. Sonoma recognized they must meet strict tolerances and standards in order to fulfill customers' needs and have their products stand out among the competition.

Project coordinator Carl Finney began reaching out to multiple precast mold manufacturers to determine the best possible way to bring their drawings to reality. After speaking with various manufacturers, it became apparent that achieving an architectural grade appearance with strict dimensional tolerances was not going to be an easy task. After purchasing several molds from different manufacturers, Carl discovered that some of these molds could not produce the quality product they demanded. He even encountered companies that refused to work with Sonoma Cast Stone based on their rigorous requirements.

Working Together

Within hours of reaching out to Norwalk Precast Molds, Carl was pleased to find himself engaged in a conference call with sales and engineering to discuss the specific details of their wine fermentation tank. Carl made it very clear that quality was priority. These molds needed to

create a product with a smooth, clean finish and have precise dimensional tolerances. Only a couple days after the mold design review, a suitable proposal proved Norwalk Precast Molds was up for the challenge. With Norwalk Precast Molds having built molds since 1906, their experience and commitment to quality assured Sonoma Cast Stone that Norwalk Precast Molds was a perfect fit for this project.

Finished Product

Soon after the wine fermentation tank mold was completed, Carl made the trip to Norwalk, Ohio to inspect and review the finished mold. Carl was extremely satisfied with the final product and fascinated with the impressive facility Norwalk Precast Molds maintains. Carl mentioned one of the primary reasons why they chose Norwalk Precast Molds for their mold manufacturing was due to remarkable customer service. Norwalk Precast Molds took the time to listen and care about what Sonoma Cast Stone needed from this project. Since receiving their mold, Sonoma has produced dozens of high quality, architectural grade tanks with the capacity to produce thousands of gallons of wine.

Norwalk Precast Molds has been serving a variety of industries since 1906, specializing in septic tanks, burial vaults, median barriers, farm products, utility products and custom molds. The commitment to product development and cost effective manufacturing remain as fresh and focused as it was in the beginning of the last century. Quality products, engineered with attention to detail, continue to bring customers back to Norwalk Precast Molds time and time again. For additional information on Norwalk Precast Molds full product line or help with your custom mold needs, call: (419) 668-1639, email: email@norwalkprecastmolds.com, send a fax: (419) 668-9156, or visit us on the web at www.norwalkprecastmolds.com.

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