

# Ford Rouge Factory Tour Shifts Safety Gears with the Help of Larco Mats



The Ford Rouge Factory Tour is a self-guided five-part experience that includes: Legacy Theater, Manufacturing Innovation Theater, Observation Deck, Dearborn Truck Plant and the Legacy Gallery.

The Manufacturing Innovation Theater features jaw-dropping special effects, from floating 3D laser projection mapping and high-energy audio to a breathtaking behind-the-wheel finale.



### Applications:

Safety Barrier

### Market:

Industrial Safety

## Problem

Located in Dearborn, MI, the Ford Rouge Factory Tour takes visitors through a real-life truck plant. The tour receives more than one million visitors annually who are immersed in a working automotive plant, exploring how the Ford F-150 truck comes together. In 2014, the Ford Rouge Factory Tour completed a \$4.7-million upgrade to better tell the story of the new Ford F-150 pickup.

In the Manufacturing Innovation Theater, a sculpted white fiberglass Ford F-150 appears on top of a four-foot tall main stage, in between two full-size production robots to re-create the factory experience. Safety is Ford's number one priority, so the company wanted to install safety mats on the floor between the main stage and secondary stage where guests are seated.

“The robots are strong enough to pick up a car engine and can reach the first three rows of guest seats, so we needed to put restrictions on the robots,” said Mike Ingles, program manager at Applied Manufacturing Technologies, the company that installed the automated robots.

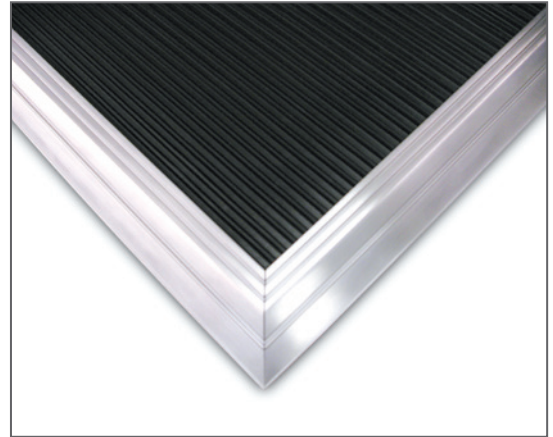
## Solution

As part of the tour upgrade, Ford reached out to Applied Manufacturing Technologies to install 14 Larco industrial safety mats to cover the floor between the main and secondary stages. Larco is a brand of ATEK Access Technologies.

“My contact at H.H. Barnum Co., a Larco distributor, highly recommended the Larco safety mats,” said Ingles. “It also helped that the Larco mats were Ford preferred.”

Larco industrial safety mats have a high-sensitivity threshold, requiring only 5-10 pounds for activation in normal foot traffic. If anyone, including a guest or employee, steps on the Larco mat, the control unit signals the robots to stop instantly.

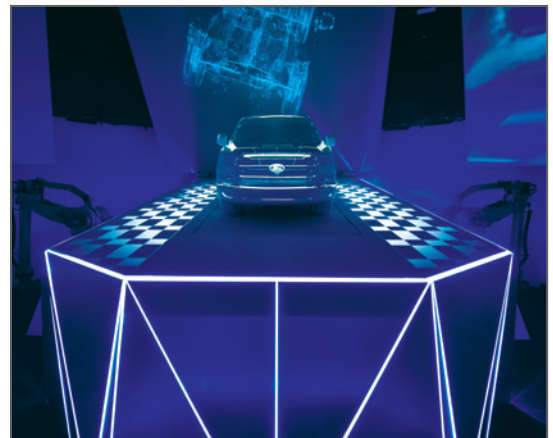
Designed to meet the most stringent industrial requirements, Larco industrial safety mats offer a long-lasting solution to machine guarding needs. They are extremely durable, impact-resilient, abrasion-resistant, totally submersible and can withstand heavy forklift traffic.



## Results

The Larco industrial safety mats have been in the Ford Manufacturing Innovation Theater for over a year and a half, and over one million guests have visited the Ford Rouge Factory Tour. Since installing the safety mats, Ford has not experienced any safety issues in its Manufacturing Innovation Theater.

“We installed soft limits on the robots and installed restrictions limiting where guests could go in the Manufacturing Theater,” added Ingles. “But the Larco safety mats serve as an additional safety measure to guarantee that if someone climbs over the rail and heads towards the robots, both robots will deactivate as soon as the Larco safety mats are stepped on.”



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