

# CONSULTING engineer SPECIFYING

## RADIANT ROMANCE

**H** Everyone deserves a warm place to come home to—at least that was the thought at the Cincinnati Zoo, where a radiant-heating system was installed to simulate the environment of a rare albino alligator—one of six in the world.

CDS Associates, Cincinnati, was called upon to design a system that would maintain the 80° body temperature of the alligator in eight separate locations of the exhibit—three pools and five basking areas. Temperature was critical in creating a replica environment of the alligator's habitat conducive to

breeding the albino alligator with a female nonalbino alligator also residing in the zoo's temperature-sensitive exhibit.

To maintain temperatures within exacting tolerances, the firm specified 1,025 feet of mineral-insulated cable and eight thermostats. The lengths of cable were affixed to the exhibit floor in a snaked pattern and attached to a power source and thermostat. Once installed, the cabling was covered by a cement pour, forming the foundation of the exhibit and a "heating pad" for the alligator.

With construction complete and the radiant heating system functional, heat radiates through the cement to the alligator's environment above. In cases where the cement is submerged in water, a thermostat designed to measure water-surface heat loss is used to ensure that the alligator's body temperature is consistent even while in the pool.

Not only is this system used for keeping the alligator warm, but zoo officials hope that it will be a friendly environment for little albino alligator footsteps.



MI cable installed at the Cincinnati Zoo albino alligator exhibit


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