



Biacryl in Halle forms and bonds the giant ACRYLITE® blocks into uniform tunnel vault segments. Then off they go to Gelsenkirchen Zoo, to delight sea lions and entrance watching children.

Four Tons of ACRYLITE® Hanging from a Hook

Spectacular delivery for Europe's largest ACRYLITE® acrylic sheet aquarium tunnel

[Aquarium technology] The whirring of the rotor blades on the heavy-lift helicopter gets louder and louder. The people waiting at Gelsenkirchen Zoo look up in anticipation. Hanging from the hook of the unusual transport vehicle is one of three tunnel segments made of ACRYLITE® acrylic sheet. It weighs four metric tons and is therefore too heavy to be transported along the paths inside the zoo. But that is exactly where it's heading, to the new Alaska theme section of the ZOOM Erlebniswelt.

The helicopter deposits segment by segment of the tunnel from a height of 164 ft. A number of TV cameras observe how the half-pipes reach their destination. This is precision work, and nothing must go wrong because there are no spare parts. It would take weeks to produce new ACRYLITE® blocks at Degussa's Weiterstadt site, have them formed by fabricator Biacryl in Halle, then bonded together. Only then could they be transported to Gelsenkirchen again, along precisely the

same route through Germany as the present ACRYLITE® sections. After five hours' work, all the individual components of the 295 ft tunnel are lined up next to each other. Everyone concerned is relieved. Now the segments have to be sealed with a special silicone compound and bonded to the artificial rock wall.

Why all this bother? So that visitors to the zoo can watch sea lions swim by the ACRYLITE sheet tunnel, while they stand beneath the water without getting their feet wet. There's plenty to discover. Viewers can watch how gracefully the sea lions move under water and enjoy their playful antics. "It was precision work positioning the tunnel and filling the basin with 468,000 gallons of water," says biologist Sabine Haas. "But it was worth all the excitement. With the largest aquarium tunnel made from ACRYLITE sheet, we now have an attraction that fascinates children and adults alike." **ck**