



WORLD WIDE WEAVE

Metal mesh: Panorama of an economic region

As a leading international training and occupational safety center, the Houston Area Safety Council (HASC) trains safety awareness for over 1,500 people every day. For the 100-square-meter parapet of the new occupational safety clinic with emergency care, Kirksey Architecture selected Omega 1510 semitransparent stainless steel fabric from GKD – GEBR. KUFFERATH AG. A new form of etching created a silhouette-like panorama that depicts the dynamic economic region and the working life of the people who live in it.

With 2.3 million inhabitants, the city of Houston is the fourth largest city in the USA after New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Alongside research facilities and giant production plants for the oil, gas, chemical, and food industries, countless buildings for the supply industry and construction and service sectors shape the city's skyline. Just 15 kilometers from Houston, in the suburb of Pasadena, construction began in three stages on the new campus of the Houston Area Safety Council in 2009. The entire one-stop shopping complex for the task areas of employee selection, training, and development, background screening, occupational safety and site safety as well as company healthcare and preventive services is certified to LEED and was equipped to the latest technical specifications. The construction of a 1,580-square-meter occupational healthcare clinic with emergency care signaled the third and last major construction phase. The pillared canopy of the glazed main entrance bears the name of the clinic and also acts as the stage for a roof parapet that follows the semicircular shape of the building and is made from stainless steel fabric from GKD. For Kirksey Architecture, the specific fabric design that enables imaging by etching was key. Their design specified an illustrated balustrade to underline the identity of the clinic, which visualizes working life in the region and with it the focus of the HASC. In



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extensive tests, GKD developed a procedure that enabled the design template from the architects to be etched to the required level of detail and spatial effect. This resulted in a visually seamless panorama of the hustle and bustle of the region over a total area of 100 square meters. As well as being weather and UV resistant, the fabric also proves its worth as efficient solar protection.



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