

Special Forces Dive School Upgrades to Rust-Resistant Lockers Built for Gulf Coast Conditions

CHALLENGE

At a Special Forces dive school on the Gulf Coast, the locker room was losing its fight against the environment. More than 60 powder-coated steel lockers – installed only a few years earlier – were already showing severe corrosion from constant saltwater exposure. Rust spread across the surfaces, doors stuck, and gear stored inside began to show early signs of wear.

Even the layout created challenges. Because the lockers couldn't stay level on the aging floor, instructors had resorted to wooden shims just to keep the units upright. The result was a space that felt improvised rather than mission-ready.

For a community where equipment reliability is non-negotiable, the risks were obvious. Masks, fins, regulators, tanks, and instruction gear all require dry, ventilated storage and consistent airflow to prevent moisture buildup.

The existing lockers weren't just inefficient. They were putting valuable equipment at risk. The unit needed a replacement that could survive saltwater, support constant use, and stay structurally sound over time.

SOLUTION

The dive school turned to Patterson Pope to help evaluate the space and identify a more durable solution. The answer came in the form of SharkCage, a galvanized steel locker system designed specifically for harsh, coastal environments.

Unlike the powder-coated units they replaced, SharkCage lockers offer a 20-year rust-resistance guarantee and maintain their shape and alignment even under heavy daily use. Perforated sides support natural airflow, helping wet gear dry more quickly and preventing trapped moisture, one of the biggest contributors to corrosion and mold.

Working with the school's resource manager, Patterson Pope configured the lockers in two sizes: larger units for instructors and mid-sized units for students and shared equipment. Each locker provided ample space for dive gear, personal items, and training essentials while maintaining a clean, professional layout.



The new system holds up against the toughest element on base: saltwater.

ACHIEVEMENT

Today, the unit's 1,500-square-foot storage room features a clean row of rust-resistant, properly aligned lockers. The galvanized frames remain level and stable even over longer spans, helping prevent door misalignment or latch failures.

"I've been around the military for a long time, and for me, the quality of this product has been outstanding," said one instructor and resource manager. "Maybe the best I've ever seen."

The updated setup supports better ventilation, more reliable security, and easier daily use. Equipment lasts longer. Users stay organized. And the space feels tailored to the mission, not cobbled together to keep up with it. But most importantly, the new system holds up against the toughest element on base: saltwater.

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ABOUT PATTERSON POPE

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