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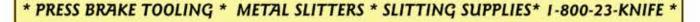


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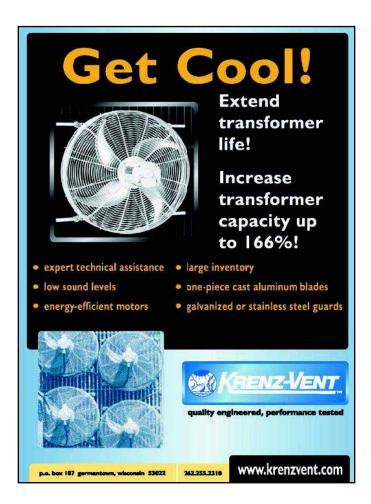
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Vol. 24 Issue 2

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### 10 Easy Tips to Increase Warehouse Safety

An industry expert outlines some of the quickest, most cost-effective ways to improve warehouse safety without investing in all new rack

Insufficient safety measures in warehouse and distribution centers can have severe repercussions, including injuries, operational downtime, product losses, property damages, and potential legal actions. Of particular concern are accidents involving collisions between forklifts or other vehicles and employees or visitors.

Within busy operations, it is quite possible that a forklift or other vehicle will eventually run into the rack. While the rack may not require immediate replacement, storage capacity and product throughput may be compromised for some time. If overloaded, or loaded incorrectly, a rack can also collapse, spilling the inventory to the ground. Employees and visitors must also be protected from vehicle traffic.

Fortunately, a well thought out rack safety program can prevent many accidents and reduce downtime, rack replacement, liability, and other costs.

"As in life, prevention is the best cure. Rather than investing in all new racking, today it is easy to use a wide range of cost-effective safety products to protect warehouse workers, products, and property," says Jim Augustyniak, a regional sales manager at Steel King Industries, a designer and manufacturer of warehouse storage racks, pallet racks and material handling/safety products since 1970.

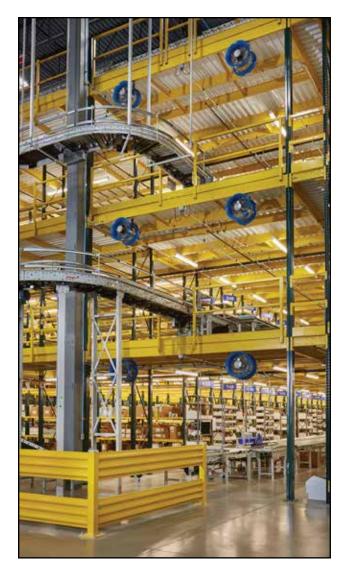
To be effective, the ideal warehouse rack safety plan includes several key elements to minimize the risks of accidents and injuries. While the specific elements of a rack safety program will be unique to each facility and operation, most comprehensive programs include several commonalities.

Augustyniak offers the following 10 Tips for improving safety, which can be implemented separately or together for even greater effectiveness:

1) Clearly define and protect walkways and work areas around racking Lines painted on the floor can be helpful in promoting separation of vehicles and pedestrians. However, when no physical barrier is provided, forklifts and other vehicles can cross over to the pedestrian side for reasons such as operator inattention/distraction or insufficient training.

A more comprehensive solution is to establish visual and physical barriers in the form of guardrails.

"Steel guardrails can keep pedestrians in defined walkways and vehicles along predetermined routes with protective barriers maintaining separation," says Augustyniak.



For heavy duty protection, three-ribbed guardrail like Steel Guard is designed to withstand impacts from forklifts and other vehicles commonly operated in warehouses and distribution centers. The guardrail can be installed with a single rail or a double rail that offers a 42-inch-high barrier.

An Armor Guard, a medium-duty guardrail, is an effective and cost-efficient solution for safeguarding workers from light shop traffic. This high-quality guardrail features two ribs and offers the flexibility to be installed at a single or triple rail height.

2) Protect equipment with guardrail and safety gates Guardrails can be used to protect mezzanines/platforms, conveyor systems, machinery, mechanicals, electrical panels, building features, and offices situated amid material handling or manufacturing operations.

"Lift-out/drop-in rails for guardrail systems can provide

protection for equipment, while allowing easy access if required," says Augustyniak.

He adds that when frequent access is needed, durable safety gates can be utilized. For greater flexibility of use, it is a good idea to use safety gates designed to accommodate an easy change in the swing direction of the gate. For added safety, sturdy steel springs should automatically close the gate after use.

3) Protect rack from forklift damage in high traffic areas Pallet rack rows can be protected from one of the most likely sources of damage – forklifts – with accessories like Guard Dawg. These guardrails are often installed at intersections and along high traffic routes to protect the rack that is most likely to be damaged, according to Augustyniak.

"The guardrail is designed to protect both the front and sides of a rack row in one installation," says Augustyniak. The Guard Dawg sections are anchored to the floor, safeguarding the uprights and standard footplates of the racking.

4) Protect rack columns from structural damage When forklift operators load and unload product on racking, collisions with an upright can occur that compromise its structural integrity.

To protect against this scenario, safeguard the rack frame and posts with freestanding steel rack protectors. These mount on the floor in front of each upright, typically 12" or 18" high, and are specifically built to protect the most vulnerable part of a rack frame — the base plate and lower leg.

"The protectors are much easier and faster to replace than an entire upright," says Augustyniak.

5) Use Snap-on solid steel protectors to help deflect impact to the rack

Some of the most common areas of forklift impact occur to the rack face. Snap-on protectors can deflect and absorb some of the impact. The protectors snap into place, attaching to the rack's teardrop holes, and can be easily removed, reinstalled, or replaced as needed.

6) Rub rails to protect vulnerable surfaces in narrow aisles or high traffic areas

Rub rails are often installed to protect end-of-rack aisles, in-plant offices, and exposed equipment. The upright is protected in two ways. First, the rub rail helps distribute any impact forces to the rear column of the

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frame. Second, the rub rail prevents the column from twisting when hit. The rails easily bolt on and can be installed at multiple levels for more protection.

7) Protect warehouse inventory from falls and fires Pallet load stop beams are designed to prevent pallets of product from being accidentally pushed off the back of a rack during loading or unloading, which can occur with certain loads if excessive force is used.

By keeping pallets in the proper position with sufficient clearance, pallet load stop beams also facilitate better fire suppression from overhead sprinklers in the event of a warehouse fire.

"Pallet safety stops create an acceptable opening between pallets, which provides sufficient space for water [from above-rack fire suppression sprinklers] to penetrate to the products stored in the racks. Without adequate spacing, there is inadequate fire suppression," says Augustyniak. He notes that the pallet stop units bolt securely to rack uprights, enabling repositioning if the rack load changes.

8) Use load supports to secure non-standard load sizes

For non-standard load sizes, consider using load supports to help keep inventory from falling between the rack beams that support the product.

"For a more complete approach, you can use welded-wire rack decking or perforated metal decking to protect non-standard loads as well as small items that may come loose from a load," says Augustyniak.

9) Keep loose products from falling off racks with barriers or netting

Loose products can slide, overturn, or topple off a rack. This is especially dangerous where the rack is adjacent to walking aisles or work areas.

To address this hazard, frame accessories such as flexible woven netting or steel mesh barriers can be attached to the rack system to prevent loads from falling and injuring those below.

10) Train employees to prevent accidents and inspect racking

While the specifics will be unique to each operation, safety training should include instruction on routine rack inspection since some damage will occur over time.

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Operators should look for any indication that rack has sustained an impact such as loose connections, sheared or missing anchor bolts, and beams or columns that are twisted or out-of-plumb. When noted, the racking should be promptly repaired, or depending on the severity, clearly marked, and put out-of-service until the damaged components are replaced.

With appropriate training and safety products, warehouse operators will minimize the risk of potentially serious injury and damage. In addition, the warehouse will improve the bottom line by establishing a secure, efficient environment that protects employees, equipment, and inventory for many years to come.

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Clean technology lasers offer superior industrial corrosion removal in myriad applications, helps solve some of industry's most costly corrosion problems

Industries have been fighting a war against corrosion in metal infrastructure, equipment, and products at great expense for generations. "The global cost of corrosion is estimated to be US\$2.5 trillion, which is equivalent to 3.4% of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (2013), according to a NACE International IMPACT study to examine the current role of corrosion management in industry and government and to establish best practices.

Given the massive industrial outlay, proactively controlling corrosion is imperative and can have an equally impressive ROI.

"By using available corrosion control practices, it is estimated that savings of between 15 and 35% of the cost of corrosion could be realized, i.e., between US\$375 and \$875 billion annually on a global basis...The fact that corrosion control provides a cost benefit is a lesson learned over and over again by industry, often too late and following catastrophic events," continues the NACE International IMPACT study.

However, traditional methods of removing corrosion can be messy, laborious, time consuming, and can

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even pose serious health hazards.

Today, one of the easiest to use and most effective alternatives in the war against corrosion is the increasingly important category of industrial-grade, clean technology lasers.

With this approach, precision laser-based systems are used to remove corrosion, contaminants, paint, and residues with a high-energy laser beam that leaves the substrate unaffected. Preparation and cleanup time are minimal, and the low-maintenance equipment can last decades. The technology minimizes operator exposure to potential environmental health hazards. In addition, no consumables are necessary.

Corrosion and the Limits of Conventional Control Any industry with metal infrastructure, processing equipment, or products exposed to water, fluids, moisture, or atmospheric humidity continually fights corrosion, which causes the deterioration and loss of a material and its critical properties due to chemical, electrochemical reactions of the exposed surface with the surrounding environment. Corrosion affects the microstructure, mechanical properties, and physical appearance of the materials.

The direct cost of corrosion includes a loss of materials, equipment, and production, plus the cost of repair, maintenance, and replacement. Additional losses can result from accidents, injuries, and even loss of life as well as payments to repair environmental damage.

Within the continual struggle against industrial corrosion, one important niche area of corrosion control involves the pretreating of metal surfaces to remove corrosion and contaminants before coating or welding.

Although metal surface pretreatment is a small portion of industrial corrosion control, it is crucial to ensure the safety, performance, and longevity of products and structures.

Insufficient coating pretreatment can lead to inadequate protection from the environment, leading to potential coating failure, moisture entry, and accelerated corrosion as well as increased maintenance, early replacement, and warranty issues. Similarly, insufficient weld pretreatment to remove corrosion and contaminants can lead to weakened or failed welds and necessary rework as well as substantial safety, liability, and litigation risk.

A More Effective Weapon to Eliminate Corrosion

In many industries, it is necessary to remove corrosion, residue, oil, grease, or paint before coating a product or infrastructure to improve coating adhesion

Toward this end, laser-based systems have significant advantages over traditional methods, starting with ease of use.

"With laser-based systems, an operator simply points and clicks a high-energy laser beam at the surface. The substrate is not affected by the laser, and the systems do not create any mess or byproducts. The approach is eco-friendly, energy-efficient, and completes the job in approximately half the time of traditional methods when preparation and cleanup are considered. Also, no consumables are required," says Wayne Tupuola, CEO, Orlando, Florida-based Laser Photonics, a leading provider of patented industrial grade CleanTech® lasers for cleaning and surface conditioning. The company's systems function either as mobile standalone units or can be integrated into production lines.

In the case of Laser Photonics, the laser systems are available in portable and stationary models ranging from 50 to 3,000-watts (a 4,000-watt version is in development) with chamber sizes from 3' x 3' in size to 6' x 12'. The systems can also be installed in manufacturing lines in cabinets or operated by a robotic arm.

In industry, the laser pre-treatment of metal surfaces can be used to streamline various manufacturing processes. For instance, it has been used to remove rust from hundreds of automotive transmissions per day. It has also been utilized to eliminate corrosion from conveying system components.

The CleanTech lasers are also used to refurbish industrial infrastructure, such as when removing a previous coating along with any corrosion to facilitate the new coating's adhesion to the surface.

Another common laser application involves pre-weld treatment to remove corrosion, mill scale, residue, and any impurities on the surface of the base material that would compromise the weld's effectiveness. It is essential to avoid any such contamination on a weld's surface, which could otherwise lead to a weakening of the weld's mechanical properties, requiring rework.

Laser treatment is also used for post-weld cleaning to increase the life expectancy and corrosion resistance of a welded joint. Post-weld cleaning is important for stainless steel as well. Welding can cause a

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"heat tint," a discolored, thickened top layer on the stainless steel around the weld bead within the heat affected zone that compromises corrosion resistance. Removing the heat tinted top layer is necessary to restore stainless steel's full corrosion resistance and aesthetic value.

A further benefit of the laser systems is that some of the most advanced units are designed to last for decades. For example, CleanTech laser systems can last for 50,000 to 100,000 hours. In addition, virtually no maintenance is needed after purchase and no consumables are required.

Given the devastating cost of corrosion to industry and the inherent limitations of typical control methods, lasers are becoming a best practice technique to combat it in facilities and in the field. Laser treatment effectively removes corrosion for many industrial applications, minimizes cleanup time and operator exposure to potential environmental health hazards, lasts for decades, and requires no consumables.

For more information on laser cleaning solutions for surface preparation, contact Laser Photonics at (407) 804-1000 or visit www.laserphotonics.com.

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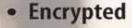


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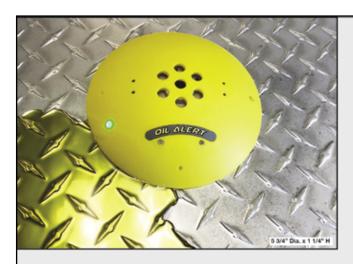
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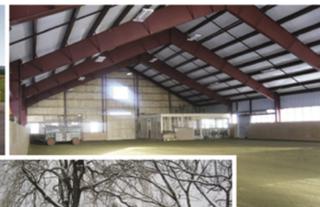
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