

# MAKING RACK SAFETY A PRIORITY

In the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act of 1970, **OSHA** requires that employers offer a workplace that is free from known hazards to its employees. These hazards are defined as "those likely to cause serious physical harm or, worse case, death."

While it encourages employers and employees to reduce workplace hazards, it does not go into great detail regarding clear guidelines when dealing with pallet rack damage specifically. Thus, it is up to companies and warehouse managers to acknowledge the risks posed by rack damage and proactively prevent them from occurring. In "[Material Handling and Storage](#)" an industry document published by OSHA, they broadly cover the precautions employers and workers can take to avoid "storage hazards." Figuring out, in practical terms, what these hazards might be and what to do with them is mostly left up to the user.

While there are many aspects that need to be attended to in a warehouse, rack safety should be a concern for all those who work with or in close proximity of a racking system. The collapse of a racking system can lead to costly insurance claims, liabilities, loss of productivity or worse yet, the loss of human life. Accumulated damage or inaction can heighten the risk level in your warehouse, cause significant delays in your operations if your racks need to be offloaded, preventing you from using some valuable storage space...all things that can have a truly negative impact on your bottom line.

Warehouses are busy with constant movement of people, merchandise and heavy equipment, and safety is an ongoing process that needs to be continuously assessed. So where does one start? Here are a few steps you can take to greatly improve the safety of your warehouse:

**Assess** – A baseline survey of your racking systems will give you a clear picture of the state of your racks.

**Prioritize** – Target key problems or areas

**Take action** – Repair or replace damage and then protect your racking from future impact

**Engagement** – Communicate your goals and onboard employees, making it easy for people to report damage

**Culture change** – Employee training, measuring success and reward for keeping warehouse safe

Follow-up with:

Establishing regular inspections as part of your maintenance program.

Looking at damage patterns, high traffic areas and protecting these parts of your rack systems

Consider bringing in an expert for additional support in establishing priorities.

**Damotech can help you in building a rack safety program and is the only rack repair and protection solutions provider approved by P&G**

