



Case Study: How Column Protectors Increased Warehouse Safety

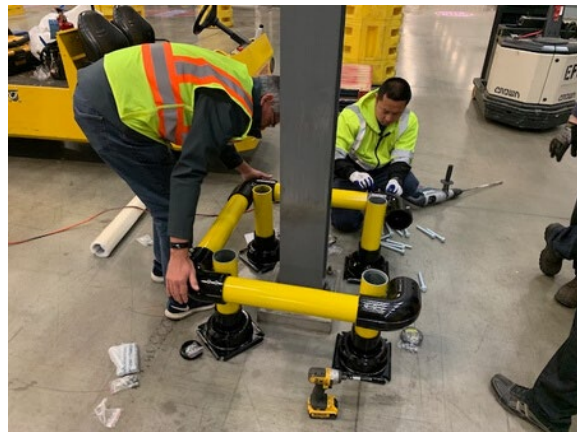
Customer

Large Midwest Grocery Chain

Situation

It's common to see plastic column wraps in warehouses to protect their columns from forklift damage, but they can often create more problems than they solve. Plastic column wraps only slightly cushion the impact. They're prone to cracking, and when this happens, they leave your column vulnerable. Their openings can be magnets for litter and debris, which can be an unwelcoming sight in a food storage facility. Also, since column wraps completely cover the base of the column, they hide the damage caused by forklifts. When columns fail or are impacted, the entire structural integrity of the building can be compromised.

When the plastic column wraps break, several issues arise. First the issue that appeared for the grocery chain was the expense of costly repairs. At the time, the grocery store chain was spending \$600 per column wrap with continual replacement. The total replacement cost for all 51 columns came in just over \$30,000. Another issue that arose was the gathering of food or garbage becoming trapped in the crevices of the broken column wraps. The hollow gaps in the plastic would create area for employees to utilize the space as trash receptacles. This is a cleanliness issue for any food storage facility, which is why the grocery chain made it a point to replace the broken wraps as soon as possible. The last issue that occurred was the column wraps made it impossible to recognize any damage that had occurred which created safety concerns. Unfortunately, the only way to inspect the column was to remove the column wrap and only then can you see if the column had been compromised which could have led to questioning the structural integrity of the building.





Solution

The grocery chain partnered with Impact Recovery's SlowStop® protective guarding product line to find a solution to preserving their columns while saving money in the process. SlowStop's steel rebounding column protectors provided an optimal solution that avoided costly replacements without compromising safety or cleanliness. Fifty-one SlowStop Column Protectors were installed, each in about an hour, and the company started reaping the benefits immediately. Even though each guard costs more than double the plastic wraps, the grocery chain saved money in the long run by not having to replace broken plastic column wraps, eliminating cleaning issues, and providing greater overall safety. Though column protectors are no replacement for proper forklift training and safety, they do provide an extra defense in the event of accidental impact. When warehouses can go the extra mile to protect their assets, they have a much better chance of creating a safe, functional environment for their employees and the company at large.