



Mezzanine Safeti-Gates, Inc.

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An OPEN and SHUT Case for Plant Mezzanine Safety

MEZZANINE SAFETI-GATES PROVIDES GROCERY SUPPLY COMPANY WITH GATES FOR A SAFER WORK ENVIRONMENT

In today's economy, companies are under added pressure to increase revenue. For many distributors, increased revenue frequently depends upon the amount of commodities they can sell during a period of time. In many cases, having additional warehouse space to store the inventory makes a difference between operating at a profit or a loss. Distributors often find that it is more cost effective to increase space in the warehouses by building up rather than out. Added levels in warehouses call for positive proactive fall protection and safety devices.

Grocery Supply Company, one of the four divisions of GSC Enterprises, Inc., is a wholesale grocery distributor. Located in Sulphur Springs, Texas, the company delivers products primarily to convenience stores and other wholesale distributors in over a quarter of the United States.

Don Owen, safety director of GSC Enterprises, Inc., works on OSHA, DOT and other safety concerns with safety coordinators, division managers and department managers at all four company divisions. While talking with managers at the 400,000 square foot Sulphur Springs warehouse, it was brought to his attention that the company needed to upgrade its fall protection devices in the Repack Department.

"The mezzanines in the Repack Department have two upper levels with several areas on each level for storage of products and tote boxes that are 'repacked' with small items for delivery," said Owen. "Forklift drivers constantly stock these locations so that the employees working on the mezzanines can have the necessary products and totes needed to pull customer orders. Fall protection was a concern."



Grocery Supply Company's facility before installing safety gates.



A Rack Supported Safety Gate in Grocery Supply Company's Sulphur Springs facility.

The single-gate safety system that was in place at the Sulphur Springs facility relied on employees to manually raise and lower a heavy gate via a rope and pulley system, often leaving areas unprotected. Before purchasing new safety equipment, Owen determined the specific parameters that the new system had to meet in order to be successful within the facility. In addition to fitting within their existing structures, the new system needed to have a gate that when opened from ground level would allow pallet access via the forklift as well as provide fall protection for the employees working on the upper levels while items were being stocked. When the new system closed, it had to provide fall protection for the employees working on the mezzanine while they either stocked items or began using the totes.

"I did an extensive search for the new safety system at trade shows, in safety magazines and on the Internet," said Owen. "I found several companies that manufacture safety gates, but the Roly™ Safety Gate from Mezzanine Safeti-Gates was the best product for our needs, as far as fall protection and ease of operation." *(continued on back side)*

Grocery Supply Company Finds A Solution

After speaking with Owen, a representative from Mezzanine Safeti-Gates visited the Sulphur Springs facility to review their application. "When we visited Grocery Supply Company's facility, we realized that we had to contend with space limitations in order to provide a true level of safety," said Aaron Conway, vice president of Mezzanine Safeti-Gates. "The system that was in place maximized the available space on the mezzanine, and we did not want to encroach into their warehouse space in order to make the area safer. Our Rack Supported Safety Gate was the perfect solution. After the visit, our engineering department designed gates to fit within their existing rack structure that took up the least amount of space while providing the highest level of protection."

Patented in both the U.S. and Canada, the Rack-Supported Roly Safety Gate is a dual-gate safety device that is pre-engineered to attach to standard rack components and integrate into its framework. The gate design is engi-



The Rack Supported Safety Gate

neered to significantly reduce accidents associated with mezzanine loading areas. The design creates an enclosed workstation providing constant protection for both the worker and materials during loading and off-loading operations of palletized materials. Units consist of a front and rear gate and formed steel channels that attach to the existing rack structure. The front and rear gates are interconnected with cables and counter-balanced by a pulley system and torque shaft. When one gate is lifted up, allowing access to the workstation, the ledge gate automatically closes. There is always a gate between the operator and the mezzanine ledge.

"During our meeting with Mezzanine Safeti-Gates, we took measurements at each location where we needed to place a gate" said Owen. "When the gates arrived, they were with the exact measurements we requested. Our Maintenance Department was then able to install each gate with little or no problems."

"We designed the gates to integrate into Grocery Supply Company's facility," said Conway. "With our Rack Supported Safety Gate, we were able to provide reliable and constant protection while taking up a minimum amount of space. We were even able to increase the pallet drop area by projecting the channels of our safety gate six inches off of the ledge side and incorporating angle iron

to extend the platform. In addition, we were able to supply power to these units for the first time, providing the employees with added ease of use and safety."

"Since the gates were installed in the Sulphur Springs facility, our employees have loved them - especially the forklift drivers," said Owen. "With the power-operated Rack-Supported Safety Gate, all the drivers have to do is push a button and the gate is lifted. The employees working on the mezzanines have real confidence in the gates and the overall protection they provide."

A total of eleven safety gates were installed to provide safety and fall protection in Grocery Supply Company's Sulphur Springs facility. Each unit is power operated by a 110-volt, one-half horsepower, 1,000 RPM commercial motor with two three-button switches for open, close and stop. One push-button station is mounted on the rack near the gate, while the other is on the lower level for easy access to forklift operators. The power-operated gates also include a safety clutch that will engage if the gate is obstructed when it is closing. Mezzanine Safeti-Gates also supplied covers that protect each gate motor.

"Overall, we're thrilled with the safety gates," said Owen. "Not only have all of our processes stayed intact, but the overall production has increased due to the ease of operating the gates. Our employees are confident that the company has taken the necessary steps to provide them with a safe work environment."

For more information on Mezzanine Safeti-Gates, Inc. and its product line, contact the company at 174 Western Avenue, Essex, Mass., 01929-1110, by telephone at (978) 768-7593, fax at (978) 768-1101, email at sales@MezzanineSafetyGates.com or on the Web at www.MezzanineSafetyGates.com.