



# The Guide to Safe Management of Racking & Storage Equipment



**GOOD SAFETY - IS NO ACCIDENT!**

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## Ensure that you do not fall foul of statutory Health and Safety requirements.

The responsibilities for avoiding accidents and occupational ill-health lies with **the employer and employees**. Pleading ignorance is not a defense. Responsibility could therefore fall upon:

- **The company**
- **The line manager or**
- **The employee.**

It is the responsibility of **EVERY** member of an organization to ensure;

- **All actions are taken to ensure that plant and system are safe and without risks to health, and:**
- **Where safety hazards exist or risks have been identified, they are brought to the attention of the relevant parties.**

The result if a company or its employees are found guilty of not demonstrating duty of care, of non-compliance or negligence, is prosecution by a magistrate with a maximum fine of £20,000 and 6 months imprisonment. Crown Courts have the power to impose limitless fines and up to 2 years imprisonment for certain offences.

In addition to the financial aspects the consequences can be far reaching.

- **Injury or even death to employees.**
- **Disruption to the organization resulting in costly downtime.**
- **Damage to the materials being stored resulting in lost revenue.**
- **Damage to third party materials and loss of goodwill.**
- **The bad publicity which may occur.**
- **Escalating insurance premiums.**
- **Claims for negligence.**

It is important to note that Health & Safety at Work Act not only applies to warehouses, but also applies to,

- **All workplaces, both old and new.**
- **Shops, offices, stores and factories.**

Our experience tells us that there is not one factory, warehouse or workplace in the UK that does not have racking or storage system that has not been damaged at one time or another.

After slips and falls in the workplace, accidents caused by neglect or damage to pallet racking or storage shelving in factories and warehouses must rate a close second. And more seriously there are thousands of potential accidents just waiting to happen.

If you have a warehouse or storage area fitted out with racking that is totally without damage then you are luckily amongst the .0001% of warehouse managers or operators not suffering from this major problem.

The following is taken word for word from:

## **Health and Safety Executive, Maintenance Procedures for Racking and Shelving Systems**

In general, racking and shelving systems are manufactured from relatively lightweight materials. As a consequence, there is a limit to the amount of abuse they can withstand. Any damage to the structure will significantly reduce its load carry capacity and clearly, the greater degree of damage, the less its strength will be, until ultimately it is highly likely to collapse – even when supporting a comparatively light load.

To ensure that the new installation continues to be both serviceable and safe for the operators, it is recommended that the following procedures are followed.

- **Regular, planned inspections of the racking should be carried out by suitably qualified individuals with the following aims:**
  - **Identifying any damage.**
  - **Determining the extent of the damage.**
  - **Determining the remedial action(s) required.**
  - **Operators should be encouraged to report any damage, no matter how minor, as soon as it occurs, so that its effect can be assessed.**
  - **Information displayed on the maximum load notices should be strictly adhered to at all times.**
  - **The supplier should be contacted for advice in the following circumstances:**
    - **Where there is any uncertainty about the integrity or load capacity of the system.**
    - **When the user is considering making alterations to the system configuration.**
    - **A record book, or similar recording system, should be maintained, with details of regular inspections (see 1 above), damage to the system and all repairs carried out.**

Health & Safety requirements cover all business - ambient, chill and cold-store warehouses, and archive and document storage facilities. No type of business is exempt!

***EVERYONE IS RESPONSIBLE TO ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF YOUR EMPLOYEES AND CO-WORKERS IS CONSIDERED OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE.***

## Truthfully consider the following:

- Q:** Do you need your shelving and racking to meet the requirements of the current Health and Safety requirements and SEMA Codes and guidelines?
- Q:** Is there a high level of activity in your warehouse premises, and particularly high risk activity where mechanical handling equipment (fork lift trucks and the like) could damage your racking?
- Q:** Do you consider that some parts of your racking system are damaged, and ought to be replaced?
- Q:** Do you have a concern about the potential risk of injury to personnel by the continued use of damaged racking?
- Q:** Are you interested in minimising the risk of what would likely be an enormous cost in the event of a racking collapse?

Bear in mind that you would almost certainly need to consider the cost of replacing damaged goods and merchandise, and perhaps a brand new racking system. You might also need to transfer your operation to temporary premises for a while. Then there could always be a potentially huge cost (in terms of both time and money) for legal proceedings that could also ensue.

**A:** If you've answered honestly YES to one or more of the above, then you need a **Planned Maintenance Programme**.

Routine rack inspections are required under Health and Safety legislation. Pallet racking and storage systems are classified 'Work Equipment' and for that reason regular documented inspections are compulsory.

Typically a regular rack safety report at 12 month intervals is sufficient, though this could be more often depending on individual operational procedures.

Certainly an inspection and report should be carried out if any changes are made.

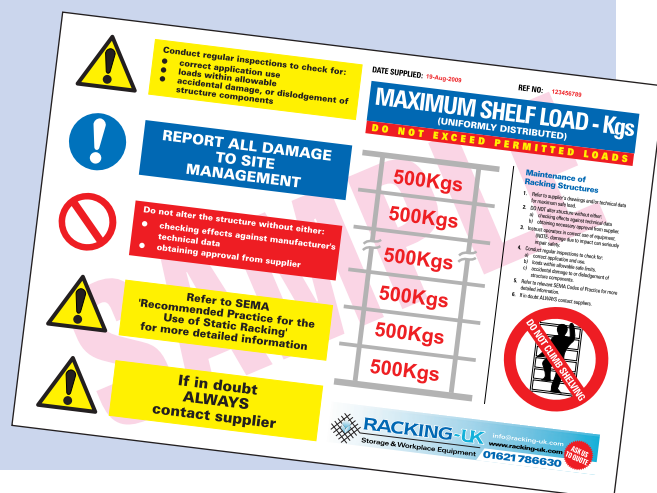
Our Planned Maintenance Programme is a step by step method of checking and identifying damage to racking and shelving storage systems. The Programme uses professional services of Racking-UK and on the job involvement of the client's staff.

Statutory Health & Safety recommendations require that appropriate Load Notices are fitted to all racking and storage systems.

Responsible, planned procedures can lessen maintenance costs overall and in some instance may also help reduce insurance premiums.

[CLICK HERE](#) to request a copy of our Planned Maintenance Programme literature.

**ACCIDENTS JUST WAITING TO HAPPEN.**



Some Sample Load Signs

**DATE SUPPLIED: 20-Aug-2009 REF NO: 123456789**

**MAXIMUM BEAM LOAD - Kgs**  
(UNIFORMLY DISTRIBUTED)

**MAXIMUM BAY LOAD - Kgs**

**RACKING-UK**  
Storage & Workplace Equipment  
01621 786630

**Conduct regular inspections to check for:**

- correct application use
- loads within allowable
- accidental damage, or dislodgement of structure components

**REPORT ALL DAMAGE TO SITE MANAGEMENT**

**Do not alter the structure without either:**

- checking effects against manufacturer's technical data
- obtaining approval from supplier

**Refer to SEMA 'Recommended Practice for the Use of Static Racking' for more detailed information**

**If in doubt ALWAYS contact supplier**

**SALES TO NOTE**

**MAX LOAD PER ARM + TOTAL LOAD PER COLUMN KGS**  
**DO NOT EXCEED PERMITTED LOADS**

**Maintenance of Racking Structures**

- Refer to supplier's storage system technical data for maximum safe load.
- DO NOT alter structure without either:
  - checking effects against manufacturer's technical data
  - obtaining approval from supplier
- Inspect structure to correct use of equipment. Protect storage area to prevent any unsafe usage.
- Contact supplier to check for:
  - correct application use,
  - loads within allowable limits,
  - accidental damage or dislodgement of structure components.
- Refer to SEMA Code of Practice for more detailed information.
- It is your **ALWAYS** contact supplier.

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**CONDUCT REGULAR INSPECTIONS TO CHECK FOR: CORRECT APPLICATION USE, LOADS WITHIN ALLOWABLE, ACCIDENTAL DAMAGE, OR DISLODGE-MENT OF STRUCTURE COMPONENTS.**

**REPORT ALL DAMAGE TO SITE MANAGEMENT.**

**DO NOT ALTER THE STRUCTURE WITHOUT EITHER: CHECKING EFFECTS AGAINST MANUFACTURER'S TECHNICAL DATA, OBTAINING APPROVAL FROM SUPPLIER.**

**REFER TO SEMA 'RECOMMENDED PRACTICE FOR THE USE OF STATIC RACKING' FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION.**

**IF IN DOUBT ALWAYS CONTACT SUPPLIER.**

**FOR SAFETY'S SAKE REPORT ALL MAX DAMAGE.**

**SALES TO NOTE**

**DATE SUPPLIED: 18-Aug-2009 REF NO: 123456789**

**MAXIMUM SHELF LOAD - Kgs**  
(UNIFORMLY DISTRIBUTED)

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