Redefining Boundaries for Profitability, Safety, and Efficiency in the Fencing Industry

WHITE PAPER

Fence Hog©
EZG Manufacturing

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INTRODUCTION

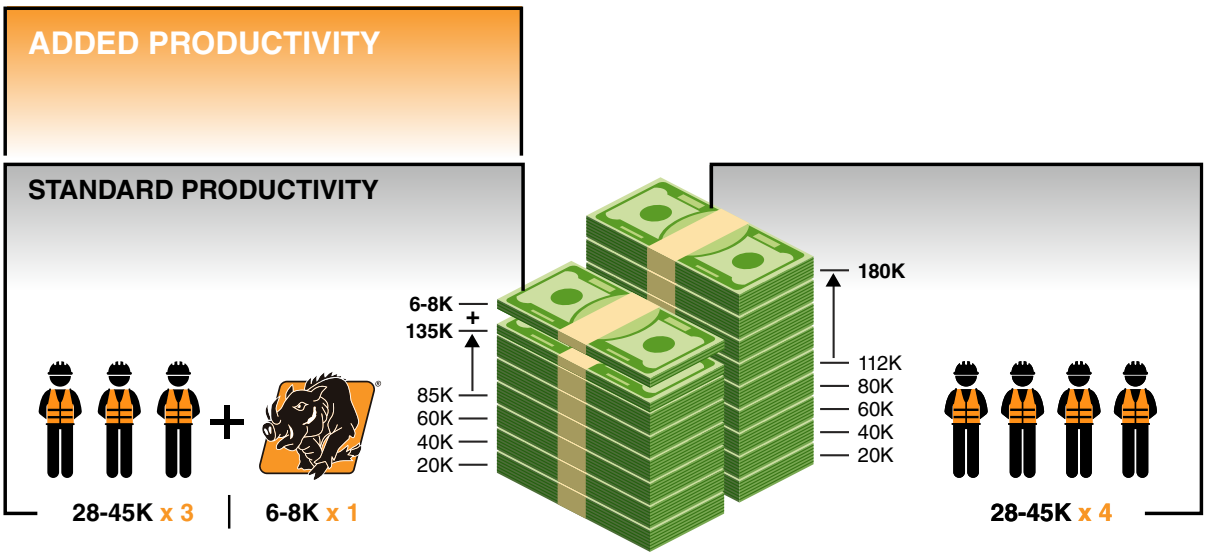
The global fencing industry reached a value of nearly $30 billion in 2019 and is forecast to have a compounded annual growth rate of more than 5% through 2027. Expansion in housing construction, transportation infrastructure, commercial construction, and energy exploration and development are expected to drive the fencing market well into the next decade. Heightened safety and security concerns resulting from political and social unrest are also increasing the demand for reliable fencing systems.

Fencing installation, particularly chain link, has traditionally been a very labor-intensive and time-consuming process. Rolled chain link fencing can be very difficult to handle due to its rigidity and weight. Standard fencing rolls of chain link, depending on height and gauge, weigh between 200 and 400 pounds, often requiring three or more crewmen for each installation. Reduced profitability, higher employee turnover, increased workers' compensation rates, and jobsite bodily injury as well as long-term injuries are all important factors that should be considered by fence installers.

EXPANDING PRODUCTIVITY WITHOUT EXPANDING PAYROLL

The greatest single expense for a fence installer is labor. The U.S. national average for a fence installer ranges from $28,287 for entry level to $44,570 for senior level*. Labor costs are compounded by sick days, injuries, cancellations and delays caused by weather, and fluctuations in consumer demand. Over-staffing to keep up with increased demand can lead to overhead when demand falls off. Maintaining a lean staff can lead to delays in production and the need to refuse work due to project backlogs.

The Fence Hog maximizes productivity through dramatically increased efficiency. Using the Fence Hog can provide the productivity of a four-person crew with two or three men. This efficiency translates to up to 200 additional workdays annually with a single crew without adding crewmen.



DEVELOPED BY FENCING PROFESSIONALS

Professional fence builders and installers assisted in the design and development of the Fence Hog. Specifically, fence installers needed a product that picked up a fence roll from the ground without physical effort and held enough fencing to eliminate the need for constant reloading. Fencing installers and contractors also wanted a unit that required minimal maintenance, was very reliable and had a short learning curve.

Maximum Capacity. Minimum Downtime.
To meet the needs of fencing contractors and installers, the Fence Hog is available in three models, with fence roll capacities ranging from 22" to 36" 50' to 100' of chain link or 330' of woven wire. In addition to chain link and woven wire, the Fence Hog also accommodates vinyl coated fabric, snow fence, and most other fencing materials.

Mechanical Simplicity for Increased Reliability
The robust design of the Fence Hog leverages the hydraulic power of a standard skid steer loader with a universal attachment plate. Its operation is then easily controlled by the operator from the cab, including opening, losing and tilting the cage. There are very few intricate parts, so the Fence Hog is very reliable and durable and requires virtually no maintenance.

Short Learning Curve
For anyone accustomed to operating a standard skid steer, the training required to become proficient with the Fence Hog is minimal. Typically, hands-on familiarization takes fewer than three hours for a crew to become ready for an installation.

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Back Belts: Method or Myth?
Many fencing installers require or suggest the use of back belts to reduce or prevent injury. However, there is no definitive scientific evidence that supports that back belts decrease the risk of a lifting injury.[1] Worse, back belts can instill a false sense of protection against back injury, resulting in workers less likely to follow proper lifting techniques and more likely to attempt to lift more than they are safely capable.

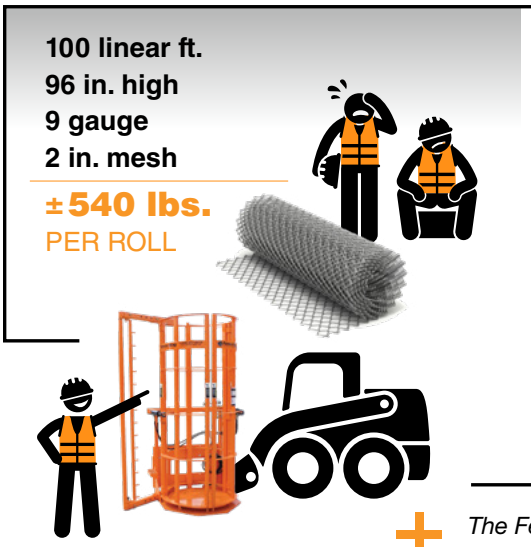
MAXIMIZING PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH SAFETY

Reducing Musculoskeletal Disorders
Ergonomic hazards rank in the top five of workplace and jobsite injuries. Proper manual lifting requires a disciplined approach that is hard to enforce in small or unsupervised crews. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommends lifting with legs rather than back, avoiding straining, not to twist or bend while lifting, and lifting close to the body. Following these stringent guidelines during a fencing installation are not always practical or possible because of uneven terrain, limited space, and other factors that vary from one jobsite to another.

Back injuries are very prominent in work-related musculoskeletal disorder cases. Musculoskeletal disorders are injuries that are caused by overexertion or repetitive motions and include carpal tunnel syndrome, hernias, tears, strains, and sprains. A 2016 study assessment revealed that musculoskeletal disorders involving the back accounted for 38.5% of all work-related musculoskeletal disorders.[2]

How the Fence Hog Reduces or Eliminates Lifting-derived Injuries

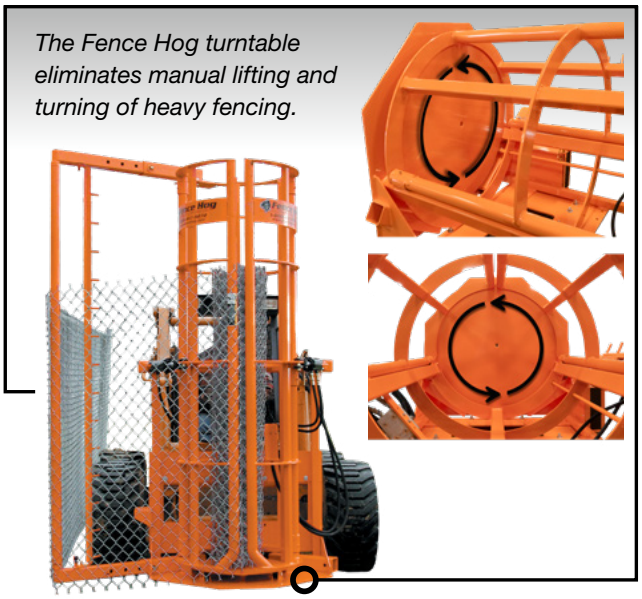
The Fence Hog dramatically reduces the weight and frequency of manual lifting during a fence installation project. A standard 400-pound roll of chain link fencing distributed between two workers, even if lifted properly according to NIOSH guidelines, still results in a potentially hazardous weight of 200 pounds per crewman. The Fence Hog is the only product of its type that allows the user to pick up a roll of fencing directly from the ground with no manual lifting.



\+ *The Fence Hog eliminates the need for lifting heavy rolls of fence because it picks up fencing directly from the ground.*

– *Fence Hog competitors require that heavy rolls of fencing be manually rolled into the cage, creating a potential for immediate injury or musculoskeletal damage over time.*

The available Tilt attachment allows the Fence Hog to swivel and tilt in any direction remotely controlled from the cab, greatly reducing or eliminating bodily twisting and bending and potential injury.



The Fence Hog turntable eliminates manual lifting and turning of heavy fencing.

How the Fence Hog Reduces Injuries from Straining, Twisting and Bending

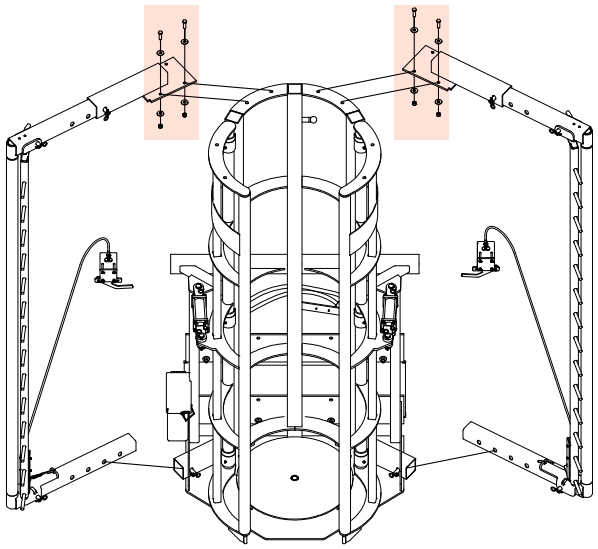
Fencing installations can vary greatly based on jobsite conditions. Fence line access may be limited by existing structures, landscaping, terrain or other impediments. When installing a fence manually, these conditions can require difficult and awkward bodily positions to compensate. Twisting or bending while lifting can result in sprain or injury, even with minimal weight load, because the weight is not properly or proportionately distributed throughout the body. The Fence Hog tilt feature can eliminate the need for crewmen to stand on steep hillsides while handling heavy fencing as well has the bodily twisting and bending necessary in a manual installation.

How the Fence Hog Reduces Injuries from Slips, Trips and Falls

Slips, trips, and falls are the second leading cause of workplace injuries.[3] Fencing installations present many potential hazards. Uneven terrain, slippery conditions, and other jobsite variables can easily lead to accidents and injuries. Manual fencing installations increase the likelihood of bodily injury because crewman must divide their attention between heavy lifting, maintaining their balance and footing while handling fencing material.

During a typical chain link installation, the Fence Hog eliminates much of the need for a crewman to walk along a fence line while carrying fencing or other heavy materials. Rolls of fencing are encased in the Fence Hog cage and rest on a rotating turntable that eliminates the need for manual lifting and turning.

The Fence Hog is forward driving, so the operator has a clear view ahead. Fence dispensing can be directed left or right, so the operator can dispense where access is easiest and least obstructed. The occurrences of slips, trips, and falls are substantially reduced because crew members do not have to walk while carrying and installing fencing.



Changing from left to right or right to left simply requires removing two bolts from one side and inserting in the other.

CONCLUSION

Pressure on fencing contractors and installers to remain profitable and competitive will continue to grow. Federally mandated safety directives, changes in the labor market, and rising costs in building and construction materials are forcing fencing professionals to address decreasing profit margins. The Fence Hog has become a proven, results-based solution that is helping the fencing industry survive and prosper in a rapidly changing economic landscape.

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[1] *Centers for Disease Control, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, Back Belts-Do They Prevent Injury?*

[2] *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employer-Reported Workplace Injuries and Illnesses – 2016*

[3] *National Safety Council, Top Work-related Injury Causes*

[*] *Economic Research Institute, 2021*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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Steve Wheeler is a fencing industry veteran who is personally and professionally committed to innovation. He provides thorough, in-field training that maximizes safety and efficiency for his clients and, more importantly, gives him the opportunity to receive feedback. This feedback has helped him to offer prominent influence on the development of advanced fencing products that contribute to the entire industry. Steve attends and demonstrates at trade shows all over the country, including FenceTech, which he as attended every year since 2013.

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