



# Pile Driving Solutions

**Looking for a solution to the stress that vibratory hammers can place on a crane, one company owner discovered the benefits of a German-made damper**

By Lisa Kopochinski

Although Pile Driving Solutions is a fairly new company – and an even newer member of the Pile Driving Contractors Association – owner Jay Mooncotch has been in the construction industry for more than 25 years.

As a former crane operator and rigger, he is only too familiar with the many challenges the pile driving industry faces, one being the damage that a vibratory hammer can place on a crane.

Looking for a solution to this problem, Mooncotch discovered the vibratory damper through Tunkers, a German manufacturer. He used it on a project and immediately realized its overwhelming benefits. After that, he entered into a partnership with Tunkers and became

their North American exclusive distributor of vibratory hammers and dampers in early 2015.

“I’ve been around cranes my whole life, and the damper is by far the best,” he said. “This equipment has advanced engineering and has been proven to work above expectations. Any time a vibratory hammer is on a crane, the potential exists for parts to vibrate off the crane, which could create injury, damage to the crane or shut the jobsite down. This damper is designed to take the shock of a vibratory hammer from the crane and the operator during pile driving applications.”

The effective shock isolation is achieved by means of a combination hollow rubber spring specifically modulated

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– Jay Mooncotch, Owner, Pile Driving Solutions



and heat resistant with a simple, but effective construction of a flexible joint.

“By using a damper during sheet piling and caisson jobs, just having a damper reduces pieces from falling off the crane, which is caused by the ongoing vibration,” said Mooncotch. “That, in itself, is a safety hazard and the damper minimizes the risk.”

The damper can be used on all cranes, such as crawlers, all-terrain and rough-terrain cranes and is available in several models, with the most common being the SD130. With the right rigging, it can be hooked to the block in minutes and requires little maintenance.

“And if taken care of properly, it can last a lifetime depending on the amount of hours it is used,” said Mooncotch.

Pile Driving Solutions has three offices in Illinois and more than 200 employees. Through its affiliation with Bridgeview, Ill.-based Imperial Crane Company, the company can now offer a variety of vibrator hammers and dampers to customers across the U.S. and worldwide.

“Our pile driving customers are spread out throughout North America,” he continued. “We have also have customers as far as Africa, Saudi Arabia, New Zealand and Australia. There is no specific geographic area that is more relevant for the damper. Wherever pile driving and caisson jobs are performed, a damper would be needed.”

Kiewit recently purchased three dampers: two SD130s and an SD180 for a bridge in New York. American Bridge also bought an SD130 for a bridge job in Dallas, Texas.

“Manufacturers like Liebherr are requiring dampers or isolators to be used on certain crane models when the machine is fitted with a vibratory hammer,” Mooncotch added.

Many crane companies stay clear of pile driving projects because of the possible damage it can do to an expensive crane, but with the damper it offers a line of revenue without the risk of crane damage or down time.

“The advantageous part of investing in a damper is that it not only saves wear and tear on your cranes, makes jobs run smoother and safer, but it opens up an entire new line of revenue for crane companies,” said Mooncotch.



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The damper has also created a new market for Imperial Crane Services, which on one specific job, generated \$100,000 by renting a 300-ton hydraulic crane, and an additional \$12,000 in rental revenue.

“Our focus is to create an entire market for crane rental companies that are renting out the crane with the vibratory hammer, and they are able to protect their cranes with the damper,” he said.

### PDCA membership

Pile Driving Solutions became a PDCA member in September 2015 with the aim to expose the damper to the pile driving industry, enhance its reputation and network with other members.

“In early 2016, we are planning to attend one of the chapter meetings to meet members like ourselves, and we will continue to reap the benefits of advertising in *PileDriver* magazine,” said Mooncotch. “We also plan to continue our marketing strategies through articles, word of mouth, referrals and trade shows.”

In fact, Pile Driving Solutions will be at the PDCA 20th Annual International Conference & Expo 2016 in May in New Orleans to display the damper.

“This damper has created a new market for the crane market,” said Mooncotch. “It will be a matter of time before additional crane companies stand behind this product and require the damper to be used during pile driving jobs.” ▼

Photos courtesy of Pile Driving Solutions



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*– Jay Mooncotch, Owner, Pile Driving Solutions*

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Tel: +44 (0) 1473 830431 Fax: +44 (0) 1473 832019

email: [sales@bspif.co.uk](mailto:sales@bspif.co.uk)

[www.bsp-if.com](http://www.bsp-if.com)