

# Home Depot Decreases OSHA Recordable Injury Rates by 38% with the Kinetic REFLEX Wearable



## SITUATION

Home Depot is the world’s largest home improvement retailer, with over 2,200 stores across North America and 250,000 product offerings. With that many products - which vary from bags of cement to lawnmowers - preventing strain and sprain injuries across its workforce can be a daunting challenge, one Home Depot takes very seriously. The company partnered with Kinetic to roll out its REFLEX wearable device to over 550 associates at 11 of their retail stores. The REFLEX device is a belt mounted wearable that can measure high-risk postures and unsafe ergonomics, providing workers with real-time feedback to raise awareness and reduce the risk of injury. With over 200,000 hours of data from their workforce, here’s what we found.

## DATA DRIVEN SAFETY - BENCHMARKING RISK

For the first 25,000 hours the REFLEX device was deployed in Discovery mode, silently collecting data on the workforce’s biomechanical behavior. During this period, Home Depot was able to profile each job role by the number of high-risk postures associates performed, isolating which ones had the highest risk. Those in the Freight department in particular showed significant risk indexes, as did those in the Garden Center, while associates at the Pro Desk maintained the lowest number of high-risk postures per day. Home Depot was also able to identify which time of day presented the highest risk profile. There was nearly a 200% increase in high-risk postures from 2-11 AM, when compared to regular business hours. Discovery mode on the device effectively created a benchmark for the workforce’s current risk profile, before activating the feedback feature for awareness and training.

## QUANTIFYING IMPACT

The next 175,000 hours of the data collected with the REFLEX wearable device provided real-time feedback to the workers via a vibration whenever a high-risk posture was detected. This was coupled with some friendly competition, where workers competed on miles walked and their reduction of high-risk postures. The results were impactful:

- **Reduction in Injuries:** The 11 retail stores showed a 38% decrease in OSHA recorded injury rates compared to the same time the year before, even though volume at the stores had increased.
- **Improvements in All Departments:** All 22 job functions experienced a significant reduction in high-risk postures compared to the Discovery mode benchmark.
- **Risk Reduction:** Associates in Freight showed a 46% reduction in daily high-risk postures, which was the highest risk job during the Discovery mode. Even the Pro Desk, which had the lowest risk job across stores in the Discovery mode showed a 25% reduction.

## NOT JUST WORKERS COMPENSATION COSTS

While the REFLEX device was able to demonstrate a significant reduction in recordable injuries, the impact on safety and operations affected far more than just the cost of workers compensation claims:

- **Worker Absenteeism:** pain and soreness is the second most frequent reason employees skip work. By improving body mechanics, Kinetic reduces the causes and costs of absenteeism.
- **Hiring and Replacing Workers:** when an associate is injured on the job, often a replacement worker needs to be hired, or overtime is required from the current workforce. Kinetic’s reduction in injuries mitigated this expense.
- **Cost of Training & ‘Ramp Up’ Period:** whenever a replacement worker is hired, or an injured worker returns to work, there is a period of productivity ramp-up.

If you’d like to learn how your company can also benefit from the Kinetic REFLEX wearable, please contact us today.



"Kinetic allows us to profile risk across job type, location, and time of day. It's a great way to manage the risk of a complex workplace in real time."

Chris Courtney  
Sr Manager, Safety Operations  
at The Home Depot

## SUMMARY

Kinetic and Home Depot partnered together to evaluate the REFLEX wearable technology with over 550 workers at 11 locations. Kinetic’s combination of real-time feedback, gamification and data driven insights led to a total reduction of OSHA recorded injuries by 38%. Every job role individually experienced a reduction of High Risk Postures, a leading indicator of musculoskeletal disorders.

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