

Front Parking Spaces and Building Protection

Consider this scenario:

A driver mistakenly steps on the gas pedal instead of the brake when pulling into the handicap parking space in the front of a store. The car hops the parking bumper, crosses the sidewalk, and crashes into the store's entrance doors.

Each year more than 10,000 pedestrians are killed by automobiles. Pedestrian deaths account for 30 percent of all motor vehicle fatalities.

Parking lot accidents are often foreseeable. We know that people can do unexpected things with their cars. A foot can slip off the clutch, causing the vehicle to jump forward and overshoot parking spaces; or a driver may inadvertently step on the gas pedal instead of stepping on the brake.

For retailers with older stores, parking lots designed with parking spots directly in front of the store, including handicap parking in front of entrance doors, can increase the risk of a customer, employee, or building being struck by a vehicle. Current parking lot design standards do not allow parking directly in front of a store primarily to avoid these types of accidents.

Bollards provide an effective safety barrier

Because parking lot and vehicle accidents do occur, store owners should install pedestrian protection on their side walk where parking spaces are located directly in front of the building, sidewalk, and/or entrance doors. Installing strong, anti-ram, impact-resistant bollards is an effective way to protect customers, employees, and the building from the damage and injuries that can be caused by these types of accidents. Bollards create a strong safety barrier between vehicles and your building and pedestrian walkways.

Even if codes do not require building owners to install protective barriers on premises with parking spaces directly in front of the building, common law can obligate storekeepers to protect their customers from those hazards which are foreseeable. If so, building owners must take effective action to protect the customer.

Retailers are implicitly "inviting" customers to their store to shop. Because of this invitation, retailers are obligated to create and maintain a safe shopping environment. Enhance your store's pedestrian safety and building security by installing protective bollards.