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Introduction to Helical Anchors

Helical anchors have been in use for more than 160 years. In 1838 a lighthouse was built upon helical piers designed by an Irish engineer, Alexander Mitchell. In 1863, Eugenius Birch designed the Brighton West Pier in Brighton, England. These piers are still in use 140 years later. The original helical piers were installed at 10 feet per hour using eight 20 foot long torque bars and the force of 32 to 40 men. Sporadic use of helical piers has been documented throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries mainly for supporting structures and bridges over weak or wet soil. Hydraulic torque motors became available in the 1960's, which allowed for easy and fast installation of helical piers. Helical piers then became the favored product for resisting tensile forces. Electric utility companies began to use helical anchors for tie down anchors on transmission towers and for guy wires on utility poles. Helical anchors are ideal for applications where there is a need to resist both tension and axial compression forces. Some examples of structures having combination forces are metal buildings, canopies and monopole telecommunication tower foundations. Current uses for helical piers underpinning foundations include foundations for commercial and residential structures, foundation repair, light pole foundations, retaining walls tieback anchors, failed foundation restorations, pipeline and pumping equipment supports, elevated walkways, bridge abutments, and numerous uses in the electric utility industry. Many times helical anchors are the best solution for your foundation or anchoring project.



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