



SHARP START



April 21 — Before the First Step

<p>Employee was drilling holes in the wall, started to get on the ladder and realized he wasn't tied off - stopped and got his fall protection on.</p>	<p>I told him good job catching before he got on that rung.</p>
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An employee was drilling holes in a wall and preparing to climb a ladder.

He got into position. Ready to go up. Then he stopped. He realized he wasn't tied off.

Nothing had happened. He hadn't taken a step yet. And that's exactly why this matters.

Because once you start climbing, your focus shifts. You're thinking about the task, the balance, the movement not what you forgot.

But in this moment, he caught it early. Before the first step. Before the exposure. He paused, corrected it, and then continued.

That pause is where most incidents are either created... or prevented.

Because it's easy to keep going once you're moving.

This wasn't about fixing a mistake. It was about recognizing one before it had a chance to happen.

Hazards

- Fall from height
- Loss of balance while climbing
- Lack of fall protection
- Serious injury from elevated work
- Limited ability to recover once climbing begins

Stats

- Falls are one of OSHA's **Fatal Four**, causing a large percentage of construction fatalities
- Many fall-related incidents occur during access (climbing up/down)
- Proper fall protection significantly reduces injury severity
- A large number of incidents occur when protection is not used or delayed

Words of Wisdom

- Stop before you start
- The safest step is the one you don't take yet
- Catch it early or it may catch you

Pause and Think

Most safety decisions don't happen during the task they happen right before it begins.

It's easy to move into position quickly, especially when you're focused on getting the job done. You step up, get started, and only realize something is missing after you're already in it. That's how small misses turn into exposure.

Taking a moment to pause and check doesn't slow the job down. It keeps you from having to react to something later.

- Do I pause before starting work at height?
- Am I fully set up before I begin climbing?
- Do I catch missing protection before exposure?
- Would I stop myself — or keep going?