



April 27 — Just this Once

Observed a contractor attempting to work above 4ft with no fall protection I asked the contractor to stop and use fall protection	Asked contractor to use fall protection and he did so.
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A contractor was working at height without fall protection.

He was already in position. Already doing the work.

It didn't look like much. Not that high. Not that long of a task. But height doesn't need distance to cause damage.

A fall from just a few feet can be enough to lose balance, strike something on the way down, or land wrong. And once that fall starts, there's no adjusting it.

Nothing had happened.

But that's the moment where decisions matter most when the task feels small enough to ignore.

"Just this once."

"Just real quick."

That's how protection gets left behind.

The work was stopped. Fall protection was put in place. Then the job continued.

This wasn't about not knowing the rule. It was about treating the risk like it didn't apply this time.

Hazards

- Fall from height
- Loss of balance
- Impact with lower surfaces or structures
- Head or back injury
- Lack of fall protection
- Limited ability to recover once falling begins

Stats

- Falls are one of OSHA's **Fatal Four**, causing a large percentage of construction fatalities
- Many serious fall injuries occur from heights under 10 feet
- Lack of fall protection is a leading contributor in fall-related incidents
- Short-duration tasks are commonly associated with skipped safety steps

Words of Wisdom

- "Just this once" is where incidents start
- It doesn't have to be high to hurt
- Protection applies every time

Pause and Think

When a task feels quick or simple, it's easy to lower the standard. You convince yourself it won't take long, nothing will go wrong, and you'll be careful. That's where the decision changes. Not because the hazard is different but because of how we think about it is.

The fall doesn't care how long the job takes. It only cares that the protection wasn't there.

- Do I treat short tasks differently than longer ones?
- Am I skipping protection because it feels unnecessary?
- Would I take the same approach if someone else was watching?
- Am I relying on time instead of protection?