SHARP START

January 30 — Wire Wheel

Coworker cleaning bolts using a grinder with a wire wheel holding the bolt with one hand and operating the grinder with the other one!	**Stopped coworker, told him to use a tripod and secure bolts and always use two hands to operate a grinder, to stay away from pinch points!!**

The bolt was small, familiar, and easy to hold, which makes this setup feel controlled at first. Holding the bolt in one hand and the grinder in the other often happens when there's pressure to keep moving or get the task done quickly.

When wheels spin fast and bolts are small,
Your fingers stand first if that wire wheel calls.
Clamp it down tight, step hands away,
So you keep all ten at the end of the day.

When a wire wheel catches a thread or edge, the reaction is instant, and grip strength is no longer part of the equation. With both hands committed, there's little ability to recover once the wheel grabs.

This is what rushing looks like on small tasks skipping setup because the job doesn't feel big.

Hazards

- Hand and finger entanglement
- Projectile bolts or wire bristles
- Lacerations and puncture wounds
- Eye and facial injuries
- Grinder kickback
- Loss of tool control

Stats

- Over **25% of grinder injuries involve hands or fingers**
- **Wire wheels are a leading cause of eye injuries** due to bristle ejection
- Improperly secured workpieces significantly increase injury severity
- Grinders are among the **top portable tools involved in lost-time injuries**

Words of Wisdom

- Clamp it or don't grind it.
- If you're holding it, you're gambling with skin.

Pause and Think

This is a classic case of *false control*. The task feels manageable because the part is small and familiar. But once a wire wheel catches, the tool reacts faster than human reflexes can respond. When both hands are already occupied — one on the grinder and one on the part — there is no escape path. The decision that matters most happens **before** the trigger is pulled: *Is this part secured, or am I about to become the fixture?*

- When have you held something "just for a second"?
- What parts should always be clamped or vised for this crew?
- Where do wire wheels surprise people the most?