

# Toolbox

## Safety Series



### Shortcuts

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#### “SHORTCUTS”

All of us have exposed ourselves to possible injury by taking shortcuts when a few extra seconds would have meant doing something the safe way. We did this as children when we jumped the fence instead of using the gate. We do it today when we cross streets between intersections instead of at corners.

Many people show disregard for the fact that minor safety violations may have serious consequences. If any of you are in the habit of taking shortcuts, you must break that habit now. In our work, taking shortcuts can be deadly. All of us know of incidents where a thoughtless act was the direct cause of an accident. In one case, an ironworker tried to cross an opening by swinging on reinforcing rods. His hands slipped and he fell 20 feet onto a concrete floor. If he had taken a few moments to walk around the opening, he would probably still be alive today. None of us should expose ourselves to such dangers.

The safe way is not always the shortest way. However choosing the safe way is your personal responsibility. When you are told to go to work in a particular area, you are expected to take the safe route - not some shorter or more dangerous one.

If there is no safe access to a particular job assignment, make sure that safe access is provided. Ladders or scaffolds are provided for high work. Use them. Even though a high job may take only a few minutes, do not climb on false work or use an improvised platform. Steps, ladders or ramps are provided to get you from one elevation to another. If they are not already provided, take time to have them installed.

Your first responsibility is to yourself. Remember that ladders, steps and walkways are built to save you trouble and to help prevent injury. If you see anyone taking shortcuts, warn them of the dangers involved and alert your supervisor. The life you save may be your own.

