

A company was hired to install electrical conduit in a 12-foot trench. The trench box was on the flat bed of a trailer. The job only required a "quick" application of glue, push together and they would be finished so they decided not to use the trench box. The worker said, "it will only take me 2 seconds, I've been doing this for 20 years, we don't need that trench box". Once the worker entered the trench and started to work, within seconds he was engulfed in the trench by the collapsing of the walls of the trench. He became a fatal statistic.

A worker needed to access a steep pitched cedar shake roof for a "2 second" roof repair, just had to slide in the missing shingle, apply a quick nail, done. "Two seconds, been doing this for 20 years". Within seconds the worker lost his footing, slid off the two-story building's roof, and ended up on the ground. He spent 4 weeks in intensive care at the local trauma hospital. The worker survived but has lasting injuries for life.

An employee was working in a sewer manhole (confined space). The employee was working where his lifeline was too short and had to "just" reach a couple of feet, thinking, "it will be 2 seconds, I'll be done then I can get out of here." The worker lost his balance after un-securing himself and fell into the 3 ft. diameter sewer main and took the ride of his life (in sewer water). The worker survived and learned a valuable life lesson.

Each day we might take risks, chances. Whether it is speeding down the road, avoiding cross walks and taking short cuts across a busy street, or having that extra drink with our friends. Many times we beat the odds. We bring our risky behavior to the job-site or place of employment. Unfortunately, the attitude, "I've been doing this for 20 years" or "it's only going to take me 2 seconds" will catch up to us and then we have an incident, near miss, serious accident, or fatality.

Here are some of the risks we see:

- We remove or wedge back safety guards so they won't protect us.
- We don't use the seat belt that is provided on the forklift, equipment or vehicle.
- Flames or sparks are not permitted around flammable liquids - but some of us smoke around them.
- Protruding nails can cause an injury - but we don't bother to remove it or bend it over.
- Horseplay causes injuries on the job - but many of us continue to play practical jokes.
- We climb ladders with one hand full of tools.
- We should wear our personal protective equipment— but it becomes too much of a pain or uncomfortable.
- We know better than to use chemicals without reading the SDS (Safety Data Sheet) - but we use the chemical anyway.
- We should wear a life jacket when working over water - but we go out over the water without a PFD.
- A bump or bruise to the head can really hurt – but we continue to work without our hard hats.
- We know not to work within 10 feet of a power line- but there's just one more load of steel to be unloaded and it won't happen to me.

This is a short list, you can probably think of a lot more because we all, at one time or another, have been guilty of taking shortcuts or saying it will only take me 2 seconds or I've been doing this for 20 years. Usually it's because we are attempting to save some time. Your life and your health are too important to risk by taking unsafe or risky chances, and that is exactly what 999 out of 1000 shortcuts are – not very smart! Get smart - think safety first –that 2 seconds can become a life changer!