Roofer Falls to His Death

A 22-year-old roofer fell approximately 22 feet (6.7 meters) off the edge of a roof onto concrete and died.

The worker leaned over the side of the roof in an attempt to nail a piece of felt that was flapping. He placed his hand onto the felt, which had no support underneath, then fell over the roof. He was wearing a fall restraint harness and was dragging the ropes behind him. However, he was not connected to the anchorage point. His brother witnessed the fall.

If you are performing jobs that require the use of fall arrest or restraint, under what situations have you allowed the protection not to be used? Is it when “the job will only take a minute,” or when “it has been done before without the belts and we didn’t fall then?”

Neither answer is an excuse for not using the safety equipment.