

# UNSAFE SITUATIONS

Allow students to predict and brainstorm possible consequences. Share information with students through discussion and use these scenarios as story starters.

PRODUCT	SITUATION	PREDICTION
Drain cleaner	When doorbell rang, the bottle was left on the bathroom floor. A baby was playing nearby.	Child could drink it; product is corrosive to skin and eyes.
Lemon furniture oil	When polishing some furniture, the cap was lost. Polish was then placed in a glass near the sink.	Someone might drink it, thinking it was safe; color and scent make it attractive.
Pills	Medicine was left on nightstand to help remind the patient to take it.	Children may assume it is candy and eat it.
Antifreeze	After changing the antifreeze in a car, someone threw it into a ditch in front of the house.	Pets have died from drinking puddles of antifreeze; they are attracted by its sweet taste; environmentally damaging.
Aerosol air fresheners/ deodorizers	A cooking smell was unpleasant so air freshener was sprayed in the kitchen. The can was left sitting on the stove.	Fumes make residents sick, or adhere to food; the can could explode due to heat.
Chlorine bleach and ammonia	The bathroom tile wouldn't come clean using a bleach cleanser, so the person cleaning mixed some ammonia with the cleanser to make it stronger.	Mixing chlorine bleach and ammonia releases a toxic gas; the fumes can result in eye, throat and nose irritations and breathing difficulty; products should never be mixed.
Furniture stripper	Your neighbor decided to strip the paint off an old chair. He's working in his workshop, and turns on the fan.	Using a fan in closed quarters will only recirculate the bad air; such products need extreme caution and plenty of fresh air.
Hair spray	Your sister sprayed her hair to keep the style in place. She left the can on the radiator in the bathroom.	Fumes from chemical sprays can irritate and damage skin, eyes and lungs; they can also cause internal harm by entering the blood stream through the lungs; container can explode from heat.
Pesticides	To kill ants in the kitchen, an insect spray was applied to the floor. People in the home are often barefoot.	Chemicals can penetrate socks and be absorbed through the skin; health effects of pesticides, especially long-term effects, are not fully known.
Oven cleaner	Although the product called for the use of rubber gloves, the housekeeper felt they were too clumsy and used the product without them.	The chemicals could cause the skin to burn or develop a rash; skin and eye contact should be avoided.

\* Prepared by Dr. Joseph Heimlich, OSU Cooperative Extension; adapted from *Oscar's Options: A Supplementary Environmental Education Curriculum*, by Carole O.Bell and Martha M. Schwartz (Rhode Island State Department of Education, Department of Environmental Management, 1986).