

# WORKSAFE SMART MOVE 2002

## ACTIVITY: HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

### Case study

Work in the classroom by yourself under the supervision of your teacher or work on this activity as a homework assignment available on WorkSafe's website at [www.docep.wa.gov.au](http://www.docep.wa.gov.au).

#### Resources:

- WorkSafe Smart Move General Module sections on hazardous substances and hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control.

#### Task:

- Read through the scenario about Mike on the **Information Sheet**.
- In hindsight it's easier to see what should have happened so that Mike didn't get burnt. Think about what Mike and his supervisor should have done to reduce the risk of injury or harm.
- Complete the **Worksheet** by writing down what you think the supervisor and Mike should have done to reduce the risk of Mike being burnt by the chemicals. Also write down who else is responsible or involved in these actions and when the action should have been taken.

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Mike was a young employee who had been working at “Dude’s Detailing” yard for a month. His job was to clean the motors of cars using a product called “Acidic Detergent”. Unknown to Mike this product contained several hazardous substances such as hydrofluoric acid, sulphuric acid and phosphoric acid. These substances are commonly used to detail (clean) cars.

Mike had to empty the Acidic Detergent from a large drum into a small hand-held spray bottle. He did this by dipping a pump into the drum and squirting a bit of the liquid into the spray bottle. When he did this he noticed that the fumes made his eyes and throat sore. He complained to his supervisor but he told him not to worry.

He didn’t supply Mike with any protective equipment nor was Mike told that the Acidic Detergent was capable of causing serious burns if it came in contact with the skin.

When Mike sprayed the liquid onto the motors the dirt and grease came off really easily – often in a few minutes – it was GREAT stuff and seemed to make Mike’s job much easier.

One day Mike was working, dressed in a tee-shirt, shorts and thongs as usual, when he spilled some of the liquid on his foot. Mike wandered off and rinsed the Acidic Detergent off. Unfortunately, it was too late. Although the skin didn’t feel that it was burning it had gradually caused severe burns to his flesh and he had to be hospitalised.

Mike’s boss was prosecuted.

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ACTION	WHO IS INVOLVED	WHEN
The Supervisor should have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>		
Mike should have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>		