

Flammable Liquids

Scenario Answer Key

There are many thousands of chemicals in use in the American workplace. A common hazard of these chemicals is flammability. OSHA has developed regulations covering the storage and use of flammable liquids.

Not all employees require special training in the handling of flammable liquids, but any employee involved in the storage, transfer, use, or disposal of flammable liquids does need special training.

It happened like this

Nick and Felix had worked together for a few years doing the same jobs. One of the requirements of their current job was to use a very flammable solvent at the end of their shift to clean the machine rollers.

When they started this job, they received training on workplace safety and the job hazards, including the use of a flammable solvent.

One day, Felix was preparing to get the solvent for that day's cleaning. But he couldn't find the safety can they normally used. Both Nick and Felix looked for a while, but still couldn't locate it.

"Here, use this plastic bucket," Nick said. "I'm sure the old can will turn up."

"I don't know," Felix said, remembering his training. "Shouldn't we tell the foreman?"

"I thought about that too, but come on, it's too close to quitting time," Nick told him. "We'll deal with it tomorrow."

"How do I bond and ground a plastic bucket?" Felix asked.

"Don't worry about it," Nick said. "What's the worst that can happen?"

What are the issues?

- Approved safety can was missing.
- Unapproved plastic bucket was used.
- Violation of company safety policies.



What did Nick and Felix do right?

- Tried to locate the proper safety can.
- Thought about notifying the foreman about the missing safety can.

What did they do wrong?

- Used a plastic bucket instead of an approved safety can to contain the flammable solvent.
- Violated the company policy on storing flammable liquids at a work station.
- Didn't take the step of bonding and grounding a container, seriously.
- Didn't contact the foreman regarding the missing safety can.

What do you think should happen next?

- Report missing safety can.
- Find approved container to store solvent.
- Felix and Nick should be reprimanded for not following company procedures.
- Felix and Nick should be retrained on working with flammable liquids and company safety policies.