

Opinion Polls

The Point

Students try their hands at an opinion poll, and learn how its outcome can be influenced by how the poll is conducted.

Materials

- Photocopies of the Ban DHMO Petition
- DHMO HazMat Vial
- Several clipboards and pens
- Posters

Preparation

- Gather poster boards and markers
- Put some DHMO in the vial, prepare additional containers (optional)
- Make enough copies of the petition information and signature pages for all students participating
- Arrange to have a table and chairs set up in a convenient location

What to do

- 1) Inform your class about Dihydrogen Monoxide. A good way to do this is by using one of the earlier Lessons (Lesson 1, “Who supports a ban of DHMO?” is a good starting point).
- 2) Once the class is “in the know,” explain that they will conduct an opinion poll of their fellow students.
- 3) Have the students prepare posters listing DHMO dangers (optional) and practice presenting the facts on the Petition information sheet with others in the class. Use containers of DHMO as well.
- 4) Set up the polling location, with a table, chairs, clipboards and petitions, and posters, if any. Students could also be placed at many points throughout the school, if the logistics work out (during change of classes, before or after school, etc.), armed with clipboards.
- 5) Have students conduct the poll. Tally the results in class (perhaps the next day).
- 6) Discuss what the results mean, and have the participants talk about any interesting or unusual results and reactions they got during the polling process.
- 7) ALTERNATE: Have students go to a safe location in an area where more people are found, and conduct the survey there. Shopping malls, churches and weekend school activities are possibilities.
- 8) Use some of the Discussion Starters below to engage the students. Talk about why people accepted or rejected the idea of a ban, and what factors most influenced people’s decisions. Consider the demographics of the people being questioned. What is their general level of education, income, etc., and are these good indicators of how people voted? Is it possible to know the outcome of a poll ahead of time by clever wording of the question? Try to design such a question. Mention that there is often a tendency for people to choose the first of two options in a two-choice opinion poll.

Discussion Starters

- ◆ How many people were in favor and how many were against a ban?
- ◆ What factors influenced people’s decisions?
- ◆ Craft an opinion poll to produce a desired result, such as a majority being **against** a DHMO ban.
- ◆ How might the polling results presented by the media be similarly biased?
- ◆ Is it ever possible to be completely unbiased when conducting an opinion poll? If so, how? If not, why not?

Ban DHMO

Dihydrogen Monoxide, or DHMO, is a potentially **deadly chemical compound**. It is a colorless, odorless fluid, and a known causative component in many thousands of deaths and billions of dollars in damage to property and the environment. Some of the known perils of DHMO are:

- Death due to accidental inhalation
- Severe tissue damage from prolonged exposure to solid DHMO
- Major component of Acid Rain
- Can cause catastrophic failure of automobile brakes
- Found in biopsies of pre-cancerous tumors and lesions
- Also found in streams, lakes, rivers and oceans
- Used in nuclear power plants, and as an industrial solvent and coolant
- Used in production of chemical weapons, Styrofoam, pesticides and fire suppressors
- Also used in production of jarred baby food, beer, soda, oven cleaners, shampoos and preservatives
- Athletes use DHMO to enhance performance

In spite of all these facts, the United States Government refuses to ban Dihydrogen Monoxide! We've decided to take the facts to the public and find out how much support there is for a ban of this dangerous substance. We need your help.

Do you support a ban of DHMO?

Name (please print)	Signature	FOR	AGAINST

Do you support a ban of DHMO?

Name (please print)	Signature	FOR	AGAINST

Are you **FOR** or **AGAINST** a **BAN** on **DHMO**?

Dihydrogen Monoxide, or **DHMO**, is a potentially **deadly chemical compound**. It is a colorless, odorless fluid, and a known causative component in many thousands of deaths and billions of dollars in damage to property and the environment. Some of the known perils of **DHMO** are:

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- Severe tissue damage from prolonged exposure to solid **DHMO**
- Major component of Acid Rain
- Can cause catastrophic failure of automobile brakes
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- Athletes use **DHMO** to enhance performance

In spite of all these facts, the United States Government refuses to ban Dihydrogen Monoxide! We've decided to take the facts to the public and find out how much support there is for a ban of this dangerous substance. We need your help.

Count how many are **FOR** and **AGAINST** a ban of **DHMO**.

FOR	AGAINST

Example Posters:

Should we Ban DHMO?

Dihydrogen Monoxide (DHMO) is a potentially deadly, odorless and colorless liquid. Some of its known dangers and uses are:

- Death due to accidental inhalation
- Severe tissue damage from prolonged exposure to solid DHMO
- Major component of Acid Rain
- Can cause catastrophic failure of automobile brakes
- Found in biopsies of pre-cancerous tumors and lesions
- Also found in streams, lakes, rivers and oceans
- Used in nuclear power plants, and as an industrial solvent and coolant
- Used in production of chemical weapons, Styrofoam, pesticides and fire suppressors
- Also used in production of jarred baby food, beer, soda, oven cleaners, shampoos and preservatives
- Athletes use DHMO to enhance performance

Given these facts and what you know about DHMO, would you support or oppose a Ban?

DHMO Dangers

Perils:

- Death by inhalation
- Corrodes metals
- Bloating & nausea
- Electrical short-circuit
- Tissue damage & burns
- Soil erosion
- Brake failure
- Disaster & destruction

Uses:

- Animal research
- Abortion clinics
- Nuclear plants
- Chemical weapons
- Performance enhancers
- Torture
- Cult rituals
- Fire suppression

Places:

- Cancerous tumors
- Cleaning solvents
- Prisons & hospitals
- Acid rain
- Pharmaceuticals
- Lakes & streams
- Industrial waste
- Baby food & beer

Given these facts and what you know about DHMO, would you support or oppose a Ban?

MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEET FOR DIHYDROGEN MONOXIDE

PRODUCT NAME: DIHYDROGEN MONOXIDE
FORMULA WT: 18.00
CAS NO.: 07732-18-5
NIOSH/RTECS NO.: ZC0110000
COMMON SYNONYMS: DIHYDROGEN OXIDE, HYDRIC ACID
PRODUCT CODES: 4218,4219
EFFECTIVE: 05/30/86
REVISION #01

LABORATORY PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

SAFETY GLASSES; LAB COAT

PRECAUTIONARY LABEL STATEMENTS

STORAGE: KEEP IN TIGHTLY CLOSED CONTAINER.

BOILING POINT: 100 C (212 F) VAPOR PRESSURE(MM HG): 17.5

MELTING POINT: 0 C (32 F) VAPOR DENSITY(AIR=1): N/A

SPECIFIC GRAVITY: 1.00 EVAPORATION RATE: N/A

SOLUBILITY(H2O): COMPLETE (IN ALL PROPORTIONS) % VOLATILES BY VOLUME: 100

APPEARANCE & ODOR: ODORLESS, CLEAR COLORLESS LIQUID.

TOXICITY: LD50 (IPR-MOUSE) (G/KG) - 190
LD50 (IV-MOUSE) (MG/KG) - 25

DISPOSAL PROCEDURE

DISPOSE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ALL APPLICABLE FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS.

SAF-T-DATA(TM) STORAGE COLOR CODE: ORANGE (GENERAL STORAGE)

SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

KEEP CONTAINER TIGHTLY CLOSED. SUITABLE FOR ANY GENERAL CHEMICAL STORAGE AREA. DIHYDROGEN MONOXIDE IS CONSIDERED A NON-REGULATED PRODUCT, BUT MAY REACT VIGOROUSLY WITH SOME SPECIFIC MATERIALS. AVOID CONTACT WITH ALL MATERIALS UNTIL INVESTIGATION SHOWS SUBSTANCE IS COMPATIBLE. PROTECT FROM FREEZING.

DOMESTIC (D.O.T.)

PROPER SHIPPING NAME CHEMICALS, N.O.S. (NON-REGULATED)

INTERNATIONAL (I.M.O.)

PROPER SHIPPING NAME CHEMICALS, N.O.S. (NON-REGULATED)

Would You Ban DHMO?

Name _____

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- Athletes use DHMO to enhance performance

In spite of all these facts, the United States Government refuses to ban Dihydrogen Monoxide! Based on the facts and what you know, make up your mind about what you would do if the decision were up to you. Would you ban Dihydrogen Monoxide? Would you oppose such a ban? What reasons do you have for making your choice?

Ban DHMO

Check one.

Don't Ban DHMO

Reason:

Would You Ban DHMO?

Name _____

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