

Who Says Sailors Aren't Ingenious?

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Perhaps a young Sailor equated a can of Freon to a baby bottle, but, whatever his logic, he now has a new story to tell shipmates—provided he's willing to 'fess up after making such a blunder.

It happened while the Sailor's wife and child were upstairs in their Navy-housing unit. The Sailor had decided to recharge an air conditioner before the onset of warm weather. To speed up the process, he placed the can of refrigerant (Freon 134A) into a pan of water, which he then started heating atop a burner on the kitchen range. In case you haven't yet figured it out for yourself, folks, we're talking serious "rocket science" here.

Luckily, "Einstein" wasn't in the kitchen when the fallacy of his reasoning became apparent. He had gone to the next room and was watching an NBA playoff game on TV. A 911 call from the folks in a nearby unit brought the fire department to the scene of the explosion.

Although no one was injured, "Einstein" had to invest in a new range top, microwave and range hood to be installed in his quarters. And, who knows what indignities and discipline his spouse may have imposed?

According to investigators, the exploded Freon can still contained the manufacturer's written warning: "Contents under pressure. Store in a cool, dry place. Can may burst if heated. Keep away from direct sunlight and other sources of heat. Do not expose to temperatures above 120 degrees Fahrenheit."

Reading and heeding that warning label could have saved this Sailor a renovation project. As the incident report noted, though, "He can consider himself very fortunate his head wasn't near the range hood." ■

