

## Guidelines for the Use of Portable Space Heaters

This guideline on the use of portable space heaters in University facilities is provided for the safety and welfare of all faculty, staff, students, and visitors, and for the protection of university property. The University recognizes that individuals have different levels of comfort associated with temperature. The use of electric space heaters as a temporary measure is permitted in some areas, provided acceptable safety measures are followed.

The definition of a space heater is a self-contained device for heating an enclosed area. Space heaters are generally employed to warm a small space. Space heaters are usually portable, or wall mounted, and may use natural gas or propane, but is most commonly electric.

These guidelines are intended for all faculty, staff, students, and contractors.

### GUIDELINES:

- Facilities Management should always be contacted if there is inadequate heat in work areas.
- Space heaters should be electrically powered except as noted below.
- Fuel powered or propane space heaters are only permissible in certain areas and only upon approval from Risk Management and Health Safety and Environmental (HSE) department.
- Space heaters used should be UL or FM approved and should be labeled accordingly. Space heaters should have a thermostat that shuts off the unit when a certain temperature is reached.
- Space heaters should have a tip over shut down feature. If a space heater is knocked over the unit must automatically shut off.
- Space heaters should be rated not to exceed 120 Volts, 12.5 Amps, 60 Hz, 1500 Watts and 5200 BTU's.
- Space heaters should be kept at least 3 feet from any combustible materials such as files and trash cans.
- Space heaters should not be placed under a desk or in other enclosed areas.
- Nothing should be placed on top of or near a space heater when in operation.
- Turn off and unplug any space heater when the area is unattended. Always when unplugging, pull by the plug - not the cord.
- Always plug space heaters directly into 120-volt wall receptacles. Use of extension cords with space heaters should never be permitted.
- Space heaters with damaged electrical cords should never be operated.
- Space heater electrical cords should never be placed under carpeting or throw rugs.
- Because of the potential for electrical shock, use of space heaters in bathrooms, laundry areas

or other areas where water is present should be avoided.

- Space heaters should not be used in areas where flammable liquids are stored – such as gasoline, paint, etc.
- Space heaters should be kept in good working condition. Missing guards and controls should be replaced at once. Have the heater checked periodically and all necessary repairs done by a qualified person.
- If a space heater trips a circuit breaker, report it to Facilities Management immediately (482-6440).
- Risk Management and Health, Safety and Environmental Department reserves the right to inspect and require removal of any space heater that creates a hazard or is inappropriate to a particular location based on specific circumstances, codes and/or legal requirements.