SPACE HEATER GUIDELINES:

Introduction

Safety is a top consideration when using space heaters. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that more than 25,000 residential fires every year are associated with the use of space heaters, causing more than 300 deaths. An estimated 6,000 persons receive hospital emergency room care for burn injuries associated with contacting hot surfaces of room heaters, mostly in non-fire situations.

When buying and installing a small space heater, follow these guidelines:

Guidelines:

Heater Placement

- Only approved University-owned ceramic or disc space heaters are permitted in offices. The 2006 Life Safety Code (LCS), under paragraph 18/19.7.8, prohibits portable space heaters in all health care and ambulatory facilities. However, exceptions to the paragraphs allow space heaters in non-sleeping staff and employee areas and where the heating elements of the devices don’t exceed 212 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Space heaters are not allowed in student rooms.
- Space heaters are not allowed in laboratories containing flammable liquids or gases.
- All ceramic space heater locations should be inspected by Facilities to verify the electrical circuit can handle the load. Should the electrical capacity be insufficient, it is the user’s responsibility to have the electrical system upgraded by Facilities.
- Electric heaters not approved by EHS or not supplied by the University will be removed.
- Heater must be kept at least 3 feet away from any combustible material (i.e. drapes, furniture, pillows, clothes, paper).
Specifications

- Devices with unprotected heating elements are strictly forbidden. Heaters with hot elements, even with guards are not allowed.
- All appliances must be UL listed or FM approved, ceramic type heaters and any device drawing more than 400 watts must connect directly to an outlet without the use of an extension cord (an extension cord can overheat and cause risk of fire).
- Space heaters must not take more than 110V of electricity to operate and cannot be rated for more than 1500 watts. Fueled powered (propane, kerosene) space heaters are not permitted without a fire watch.
- Space heaters must be equipped with a Tip-Over Shutdown safety feature.
- Space heaters must have a thermostat that automatically shuts off when a pre-set temperature is reached.
- Space heaters must be UL approved. A label will be attached to the heater cord.
- The plug must be equipped with a polarized A.C. (alternating current) having one blade longer than the other. If the plug should fail to fit, contact an electrician to replace the obsolete outlet.
- Only purchase newer model heaters that have all of the current safety features. Make sure the heater has the Underwriter’s Laboratory (UL) label attached to it.
- Choose a thermostatically controlled heater, since they avoid the energy waste of overheating a room.
- Select a heater of the proper size for the room you wish to heat. Do not purchase oversized heaters. Most heaters come with a general sizing table.

Do-Not

- Do not operate any heater with a damaged cord or plug, or after the heater malfunctions, or has been dropped or damaged in any manner.
- Do not use in bathrooms, laundry areas, or other similar indoor locations.
- Do not run cord under carpeting; do not cover cord with throw rugs, runners or the like. Arrange cord away from traffic area where it will not be tripped over.
- Do not use on soft surfaces, like a bed, where openings may become blocked.
- Do not place anything on top of a space heater.
- Do not place the heater where it will create a tripping or evacuation hazard and fire doors must not be blocked open to distribute the heat.
- Never plug a heater into dedicated data outlets.
- Do not leave the heater plugged in when not in use.
- Do not use in areas where gasoline, paint, or flammable liquids are used or stored; a heater has hot and arcing or sparking parts inside.
- Do not leave your heater on when the area is not attended or to raise space temperatures beyond 70 degrees during thermostat set back hours.