

PORTABLE HEATER SAFETY

Portable heating devices are small, electrical heating units, also known as portable space heaters. Heat is generated by running an electric current through high resistance wires called heating elements.

Facilities Management and Environmental Health, Safety & Risk Management (EHS&RM) discourage the use of these devices, and they should be used only as a last resort for temperature control. If temperature discrepancies exist, please contact Facilities Management at ext. 2355 and inform them of the temperature problem.

Portable space heaters can pose a major workplace fire safety hazard. All faculty, staff, students and visitors are required to comply with the following requirements:

- Portable heaters are strictly prohibited in laboratory areas or other areas where chemicals or combustible materials are stored.
- The equipment is UL (Underwriter Laboratories) approved for the use for which it is designed.
- The equipment has a sealed element, and does not produce any flames, fumes, or use any fuel.
- The equipment is equipped to turn off automatically when tilted or turned over.
- The heating elements cannot exceed 100 degrees Centigrade or 212 degrees Fahrenheit.
- A clear area of three feet in all directions of the heater shall be maintained and in accordance with the clearances shown on the approval agency label.
- Never leave the heating unit "ON" when unattended.
- Plug the heating unit directly into an outlet with sufficient capacity.
- Never use an extension cord with heater because it may overheat and cause a risk of fire.
- Check the heating unit before each use to make sure that all indicator lights are working.
- Remove defective units from service immediately.
- Ensure that the power cord is properly plugged in and is not damaged, crushed by objects, or covered under carpet or rug.
- Promptly report any unsafe or hazardous conditions to the Department of Environmental Health, Safety & Risk Management at 942-2180.

Periodic monitoring will be conducted by EHS&RM to ensure heaters are being used properly and safely. All heaters that are not in compliance must be disposed of or removed from university property immediately.