

UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO

SUBJECT: PORTABLE SPACE HEATERS

Procedure No: S-08-009

PROCEDURE STATEMENT

In accordance with the Life Safety Code, the use of portable space heaters is strictly prohibited in all clinical buildings, residence halls, laboratories and areas primarily used for the storage of combustible materials. The Director of Environmental Health and Radiation Safety may grant special permission for temporary use of portable space heaters in other campus buildings.

PURPOSE OF PROCEDURE

To ensure the protection of patients, staff, students and visitors from the hazards associated with the use of portable heating devices.

PROCEDURE

In the event that a heating system fails, or there is inadequate heat to an area, contact Plant Operations at 419-530-1000 on the Main Campus, and Facilities Maintenance at 419-383-5353 on the Health Science Campus to resolve the problem. Plant Operations/Facilities Maintenance will investigate the HVAC system to determine the correct heating requirements and outputs, in addition, sources of cold and drafts will be corrected with weather stripping or other control methods. If the heating deficiency cannot be corrected in a timely manner, please contact the Environmental Health and Radiation Safety Department at 419-530-3600 to be granted special permission to use a portable space heater. Portable space heaters can never be used in any clinical area, laboratory, combustible material storage area, or residence hall. Exceptions to this procedure shall only be granted in emergency situations where building heat is temporarily interrupted. Such usage may be approved by a Director of Environmental Health and Radiation Safety, only if Life Safety requirements can be met.

General Requirements for all Space Heaters

Personally-owned space heaters are not allowed for use anywhere on campus.

The two types of portable space heaters approved for use (after special permission is granted by the Environmental Health and Radiation Safety Department) are liquid-filled space heaters and radiant panel heaters. All other portable space heaters are prohibited on campus. In the event that a portable space heater is found on campus, it will be immediately confiscated by the Environmental Health and Radiation Safety Department. Radiant panel heaters are the preferred source when temporary heat is necessary. Radiant panel heaters are low wattage and are not hot to the touch; they can be used safely underneath a desk. Liquid filled space heaters can be placed directly on to the floor during use, but greater than three feet from combustible material.

These portable space heaters must:

- be UL (Underwriter Laboratories) approved for the use for which it was designed,
- have sealed element (does not produce any flames, fumes or use any fuel),
- have overheat protection to shut off when the desired temperature is reached,
- equipped to automatically turn off when tilted or turned over, and;
- does not have a heating element that exceeds 212 degrees Fahrenheit.

A portable space heater shall:

- be placed on a flat, even surface,
- be plugged directly into an outlet that has been identified to have sufficient capacity (an extension cord or power strip can never be used),
- have the cord inspected for cracks, hot spots and signs of wear prior to use,
- not have the cord placed under a run, carpeting, or furniture,
- never be left unattended, and;

- be turned off and unplugged when the room is not occupied.

In the instance that the use of a portable heater causes tripping of circuit breakers or affects computers or other office equipment performance, the further use of that heater is prohibited.

Source: Safety & Health Committee

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