

Policy Title: Space Heater Policy

Policy Summary: Establish Space Heater Standards

Policy Category: Administration & Operations

Policy Owner: Facilities Planning and Management

Policy Summary

This policy establishes the requirements for the safe operation of space heaters in campus buildings.

Purpose

This policy will provide information on the acceptable types and proper procedures using of an approved space heater in buildings.

Scope

This policy applies to space heaters in buildings that are not residence halls or Law Library Study Carrels.

Definitions

Space Heater: A plug-in electric heater that is not permanently fixed to a specific location and used for heating small areas inside a building for temporary comfort or necessity of keeping an area from freezing.

Policy

Prohibitions

Kerosene heaters are prohibited on campus. Propane heaters are only permitted for use in unoccupied warehouses or construction sites with prior approval of Facilities, Planning & Management.

Space Heater Acceptable Locations:

Drake Facilities Planning and Management, FPM, recognize that due to the age and construction of buildings and HVAC systems, renovations, or other conditions within the building, maintaining temperatures within acceptable heating range can be problematic and the use of temporary auxiliary heat source for thermal comfort may be a solution for offices or small workspaces.

Large areas should be heated by permanently and properly installed heating systems for specific building applications. Space heaters are not permitted under any circumstances in laboratories, storage areas, or other areas not actively occupied by personnel except in concerns of freezing pipes.

Before requesting approval to use an approved space heater, contact Facilities Planning and Management to see if there is anything that can be done to increase the heat in your office or workspace using the current building's HVAC systems.

Space Heater Approval:

Faculty or staff should fill out a [Space Heater Approval Form](#) requesting approval for the use of a space heater for their specific office or workspace. FPM will review the request and respond confirming the existing electrical outlets will allow for the additional load and use of the unit at that specific location. If the electrical outlet is inadequate, the request may be denied.

Space Heater Specifications:

Once a request of the use of a space heater is approved, it is the responsibility of requestor to acquire the unit. FPM provided a list of recommended models that meet all safety features.

- Tip-over shut off switch
- Automatic shut-off/overheat protection
- Thermostat control
- UL listed or equivalent and a grounded plug
- Heater housing not hot to the touch and adequate guarding on front of heater
- Several heating levels with a high setting not greater than 1500W

Space Heater Proper Use:

General requirements for the use of any space heater include:

- Operate only in safe approved manner
- Should be inspected before each use. Do not use a space heater with a damaged housing or guard, frayed cord, or broken tip over switch
- Do not use around water or flammable materials/chemicals
- Do not use in areas where large amounts of dust could be present
- Position at least 3 feet from other objects
- Never place or drape items on a space heater
- Do not leave unit running while away from room for a longer than ten (10) minutes
- Turn off and unplug when no longer in use
- Do not be operated within 3 feet of a room thermostat or sensor.
- Ensure cords are not covered and kept out of traffic areas.
- If an extension cord is used, verify the appropriate size for the electrical load and distance

Assessment:

Approved space heaters will be tagged by FPM and documented for a specific room location and power outlet. Tag must remain on unit and only plugged-in approved outlet. FPM will conduct building audits certifying that only approved space heaters are being used on campus. Unauthorized units will be confiscated and returned to owner to be removed from campus. FPM can declare any space heater unapproved if it creates a hazard or is inappropriate for a particular location based on specific circumstances, codes, and/or legal requirements.

Last Review Date: n/a

Effective Date: February 2024

Resources and Related University Policies:

[Recommended Space Heaters](#)

[Space Heater Approval Form](#)