Information

Space Heater

Effective

November 1, 2013

Applicability

This policy applies to the University Community (administrators, faculty, staff, and students).

Administrative Authority

Senior Associate Vice President for Operations

Responsible Unit

Office of the Fire Marshal

University of Louisville Department of Public Safety

2126 S. Floyd Street

Louisville, KY 40208

502-852-FIRE (3473)

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History

Revision Date(s): September 24, 2020; April 17, 2025

Reviewed Date(s): February 29, 2016; September 14, 2021; December 4, 2024

Categories

Reason for Policy:

This policy has been established to provide guidance to the inhabitants of university buildings relative to the proper method of requesting a room temperature assessment and the method by which the approval of personal space heaters can be obtained.

Statement:

Portable space heaters not approved by the Office of the University Fire Marshal must be removed. If university funds are used to purchase space heaters they must be purchased through the stock room. The use of space heaters is prohibited in residence halls and student living facilities.

I. Specifications:

a. Test Laboratory Approval: Space heaters must display a nationally recognized testing laboratory seal of approval such as Under Writers Lab (UL) and Factory Mutual Insurance.

b. Automatic Tip-Over/Shut-Off Function: The heater must be equipped with a safety tip-over shut-off function. This function will cause the appliance to automatically shut off if the heater should become overheated or is accidentally tipped over.

c. Energy Usage: Heaters may not produce more than 1500 watts of heat or require more than 120 volts or 12.5 amps of power to operate.

d. Extension Cords Prohibited: Space heaters may not be used in conjunction with an extension cord or multi-strip, and must be plugged directly into the wall electrical outlet.

II. Heater Placement:

a. Keep electrical cords, drapery, furnishings, and all combustibles at least 3 feet (36 inches) away from the front, sides and rear of the heater. A greater degree of supervision and monitoring is required when heating appliances are in use.

b. Heaters may not be used in rooms where flammable liquids and gases are being used or stored.

c. Heaters must be turned off and unplugged from the outlet daily, and whenever the room or area is unoccupied, for safety and to conserve energy.

d. Do not leave heaters unattended.

III. Prohibited from Use:

a. Space heaters are not allowed for use in Residence Halls, Greek housing facilities, or locations where sleeping quarters have been designated.

b. Space heaters not otherwise described in this policy are not allowed in university buildings unless approved by the University Fire Marshal.

c. Space heaters having exposed heat coils and are not protected by a heat grate or screen, and certain fuel-fired heating appliances, are prohibited from use. Contact the University Fire Marshal to verify if a specific appliance is acceptable for use.

Related Information:

The purpose of a space heater is to supply supplemental heat to a small space for a short period of time. Space heaters pose serious fire and electrical hazards, and are not energy efficient and are strongly discouraged for use.

The University shall strive to maintain room temperatures as follows: During Heating Season: Occupied Hours 66-72 Degrees F. Unoccupied Hours 55-65 Degrees F. During Cooling Season: Occupied Hours 74-78 Degrees F. Unoccupied Hours 78-85 Degrees F.

If acceptable ambient room temperatures are difficult to maintain, please contact Work Control at 502-852-8192 for Belknap and Shelby/Hurst campuses; 502-852-5695 for HSC campus or email:

http://louisville.edu/physicalplant/forms/non_chargeable_request and a room temperature audit will be conducted. In the event that room temperatures cannot be adjusted following a Physical Plant audit and temperature adjustment, temporary use of an approved space heater may be allowed.

Recommended Heaters:

a. Preferred heaters use radiant heat (rather than resistant heaters whose coils may exceed 1000^{o} F), and are thermostatically-controlled. Radiant heat panels are designed to heat to a little over 100°F, so they cannot burn the user, nor readily start a fire should they come in contact with clothing, paper, or other combustible materials. Radiant heaters are more energy efficient because they are designed to radiate direct heat to the users' body and not to surrounding furniture, walls, and equipment in the process.

b. Approval Inspection Decals will be affixed to heaters approved for use during regular building fire safety inspections by the University Fire Marshal. Non-compliant heaters must be removed from university property immediately, within 30 days following the inspection

c. University policy requires if using university funds to purchase a Space Heater that such purchase is made through the UofL Stockroom. The purchase of Space Heaters through retail establishments using University funds is not authorized nor will those charges be approved for reimbursement. Using the University Credit Card for the Purchase of Space Heaters would also be in violation of University policy since these items are available through UofL Stockroom.

d. Approved heater brands are available for purchase at the U of L Stockroom located 333 E. Brandeis Street (corner of Brandeis and Floyd St.) Belknap Campus. 502-852-6253 https://louisville.edu/stockroom

This policy supports the University of Louisville's 2020 Strategic Plan; Goal #5 "Creative and Responsible Stewardship" as noted in Applicability of the Policy.

This policy applies to university personnel, students, and those desiring room temperature adjustments.

Procedures:

Monthly Self Inspection:

a. Inspect heater electrical cords for frayed, hot, or brittle power cords.

b. Inspect for loose noisy motors, housing and control buttons where repair or replacement may be warranted.

c. Clean away accumulated dust particles from fan blade to avoid excessive smoke emissions or odors during start-up.

d. Inspect for missing frame cleats or legs that may cause the unit to tip-over or be unstable.

e. Do not extend power cords across walking surfaces unless properly protected by a power cord bridge. Do not extend power cords through walls, under doors, above ceiling tiles, or on wet surfaces.

f. Space heaters failing to conform to the safety requirements found within this policy must be removed from university property within 30 days or may be confiscated. Confiscated property must be retrieved from the Office of the University Fire Marshal (502-852-3473) within 30 days.

For questions regarding proper use of your heater, please contact the Office of the University Fire Marshal 502-852-3473. http://louisville.edu/firesafety