
Portable Space Heater Policy

Purpose

Ramapo College recognizes that individuals have different levels of comfort associated with temperature. The use of portable space heaters is a temporary measure to help maintain a reasonably comfortable work environment. Use of portable space heaters provided by the College is permitted provided the following safety procedures are followed. A Facilities Work Order should be submitted if there is inadequate heat in any work area.

To Whom Does the Policy Apply

Ramapo College community

Related Documents

- <https://www.ramapo.edu/ehs/fire-safety/>

Contacts

College Fire Marshal (201).684.6252

Enforcement of Policy

The policy will be enforced by the College Fire Marshal and Office of Residence Life for applicable provisions of the College's Policy. The Division of Fire Safety will enforce applicable provisions of the New Jersey State Fire Code.

Policy

Safety and reasonable comfort levels continue to be among the primary concerns of the College throughout the year. Toward that end, the College maintains heating systems that are intended to provide sufficient heat throughout the Campus, especially during the cold winter months.

As with any systems, emergency situations may occasionally arise when added measures may be needed to supplement the main heating system. In the event that it becomes necessary to provide urgently needed supplements for the College's heating system at any location on Campus, Facilities has a limited supply of Space Heaters that can be distributed to help meet those needs.

However, while individual comfort preferences are acknowledged, fire prevention and safety must also be maintained. Accordingly, the following safety measures shall apply for Space Heaters used on Campus:

- A. Employees may find it desirable to have a small space heater at their workstation for added comfort. Accordingly, portable electric space heaters are allowed under the provisions of this policy.
- B. Facilities shall control the distribution of the limited inventory of Space Heaters based on the urgent needs that may occasionally arise.
- C. The following minimum guidelines shall apply for Space Heaters used on Campus:
 1. Space Heaters shall be liquid filled and sealed type. Liquid-filled heaters use an electric element to warm water or oil, which in turn heats a radiator creating natural convective air currents in the room. The thermal mass of liquid holds heat well, minimizing fluctuations in temperature.

2. They shall bear the label of an independent testing laboratory such as Underwriters Laboratories Inc., their nationally recognized tag line is "UL Approved".
 3. Space Heaters shall include temperature limit cutoff devices.
 4. All Space Heaters shall be properly grounded.
 5. They shall be equipped with a "Tip-Over" automatic shutoff switch that will shut off the current if the unit is knocked over.
- **Residence Halls:** Portable space heaters are **prohibited** in all campus residence halls.
 - **Office Areas:** Only portable space heaters provided by Facilities are permitted.
 - Only oil-filled electric space heaters listed and labeled by an approved testing agency, such as UL, shall be used by employees in office areas.
 - Units marked "Residential Use Only" cannot be used in office areas.
 - For example, **DO NOT** bring space heaters from home.

Procedure

To obtain a portable space heater, contact Facilities Service Desk. Facilities staff will evaluate the current heating system to ensure it is functioning properly. If it is determined that a space heater may be necessary, Facilities will provide a unit approved for use on campus.

Safe Use

- Do not use space heaters if they have any signs of frayed wire, cracked insulation or any other defects.
- Space heaters must be plugged directly into an approved receptacle.
- Space heaters shall not be plugged into extension cords.
- Plugging another electrical device into the same outlet as the heater could cause overheating.
- Don't leave a space heater unattended while it's plugged in. Unplug each day after using.
- Space heaters shall not be operated within 3 feet of *any* combustible materials (paper, boxes, wood, etc).
- Space heaters shall be operated only in locations for which they are listed. They must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's directions.
- Never use space heaters in areas where combustible vapors may be present.
- Keep space heaters from getting wet.
- Never touch space heaters if you are wet.
- Space heaters shall not be used to dry wet or damp garments such as gloves, hats or scarf's.
- Kerosene, LPG or similar fueled or solid fuel heaters are prohibited from use inside any buildings on Campus!