

Portable Space Heaters

If there is a problem with insufficient heating in a Tulane building, Facilities Services/Plant Operations must be notified. If the heating problem cannot be corrected in a timely manner, portable electric space heaters *may* be allowed on a case by case basis. However, due to concerns about fires and electrical problems, the purchase and use of heaters must be approved **in writing** by both the Office of Environmental Health & Safety (OEHS) and Facilities Services. OEHS will review and approve heater specifications prior to purchase and Facilities will be asked to determine if the electrical circuit can handle the additional load. Individual departments are responsible for the cost of the heaters and for obtaining the required approvals.

Heater Specifications:

1. Fueled (gas/oil) heaters are not allowed under any circumstances. Only electric heaters rated at standard 110-volt AC power and a maximum of 1500 watts are permitted.
2. Heaters must be approved by a recognized testing laboratory, such as Factory Mutual (FM) or Underwriters Laboratory (UL) and must be labeled accordingly.
3. The space heater must be equipped with a safety shutoff switch that automatically turns the unit OFF if it is tipped over.
4. The space heater must be equipped with an operational thermostat which automatically turns the unit off when the set temperature is reached.

Usage Requirements:

1. Space heaters are prohibited in the following locations:
 - a. Labs or other areas where flammable liquids (gasoline, paint, solvents) may be present.
 - b. University housing (dorms, apartments)
 - c. Areas where young children may be present
 - d. Wet locations (bathrooms, kitchens, etc.)
2. Space heaters need SPACE. Keep combustible materials (paper, wood, fabric, etc.) at least three (3) feet away from the heater.
3. Space heaters must be plugged directly into a wall outlet. Use of extension cords is strictly prohibited.
4. Power cords must not present a trip hazard or be run under rugs or carpet or other concealed spaces.
5. Heaters must be in clear sight and not placed in enclosed areas under desks or workstations.
6. Heaters must be placed directly on the floor—not on furniture or shelving.
7. Heaters must be turned OFF when the heated space is not occupied.
8. The employee(s) using the heater must be provided with a copy of the heater manufacturer's operating instructions and this guidance document. Affected employees are responsible for reviewing these materials.
9. Do not use the heater if it has a frayed power cord or overheats. Put a warning sign on it, take it out of use & either get it repaired or replaced.
10. Unauthorized use of space heaters without written approval by both OEHS and Facilities Services is a violation of University policy.