

POLICY - THE USE OF PERSONAL SPACE HEATERS AT BYU-IDAHO

The use of portable heating devices, particularly space heaters, has contributed to many industrial and residential fires. At BYU-Idaho, the uncontrolled use of space heaters has caused many problems; e.g. overloading electrical circuits, shutting down the heat to areas of the building, shutting down computer circuits causing loss of data and additional problems with computer programs, etc.

There are special circumstances when space heaters may be needed, it is for those times that the following has been established.

This policy has been prepared to clarify the university's position on this subject. The following process must be followed when the use of a space heater is felt:

Step 1) If your area is cold, please contact Physical Facilities and they will send over someone from HVAC to evaluate the heating system and adjust the heat in your area making it more comfortable.

Step 2) After HVAC has evaluated your area and determined that they have done all that they can do, and an individual is still in need of a nearby heat source, the Electrical Shop is to be notified. They will determine if there is sufficient power in the area to handle the addition of a personal heater.

Step 3) After the first two steps are completed, and the Electrical Shop has determined that there is an adequate power supply near the employee, then the Safety Office is contacted to help determine the type of personal heat device would be appropriate for the area.

Approved personal heaters may only be used for limited times and are not for constant year long use. If the use is to exceed 90 days, the situation is to be re-evaluated following the above steps.

All approved space heaters shall meet the following minimum requirements:

- U.L. listed.
- The unit must be in excellent working condition.
- Ceramic or Radiant heaters, or heat panels only will be approved.
- Tip-over sensor that automatically shuts down the unit when accidentally tipped over.
- Cool, to the touch, body construction.
- Automatic over-temperature sensor which shuts down the unit.
- Low Amperage (3 to 12 amps)
- The electrical cord is the 3-prong, grounded type, or internally grounded 2 prong type.
- The heater shall not be plugged into the same electrical circuit as electronic devices; i.e. computers, printers, etc.
- The heater shall be plugged directly into a wall outlet.
- Only extension cords approved by the Physical Facilities Electrical Department and/or the Safety Department may be used with space heaters. These cords must be UL tested and marked as either 14 AGW or 12 AGW. Higher numbers (16 +) mean a lighter duty cord and may overheat, causing a fire.

- The heaters are to be placed only on the floor when in operation. Panels are to be mounted under the desk by Physical Facility Maintenance personnel.
- Combustible materials are to be kept at least 3 feet from the unit, or separated by a fire resistant barrier.
- The space heater is to be turned off when you leave the area for more that 30 minutes and at the end of each day.
- Since the added heat in the area can, and many times does, effect the heating for the entire area, HVAC has to be contacted and final approval of placement will be by them.

This policy is in effect as of December 3, 2004, Updated on May 25, 2010, and has the full support of the Presidents Council. If you have any questions concerning this information, please contact the Security & Safety Office at 3053, or Marie Wells in the Physical Facilities Customer Service Center at 2431.