

# Space Heaters

FIN-INS-18



## About This Policy

Effective Date:

01-02-2000

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09-09-2011

Responsible University Office:

Office of Insurance, Loss Control &amp; Claims

Responsible University Administrator:

Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

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## Related Information

\* [CBS News: A Guide to Space Heaters](#)

## Scope

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## Scope

This applies to all University properties, including student occupied property.

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## Policy Statement

Space heaters, as temporary heat, may be used subject to the restrictions of this policy.

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## Reason For Policy

Indiana University recognizes that individuals have different levels of comfort associated with temperature and heat. Although not encouraged, the use of electric space heaters as a temporary measure is permitted in limited applications.

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## Procedure

Only space heaters meeting the following criteria are permitted:

- Only ceramic space heaters are permitted. Radiant heaters may not be used.
- The heater must be electrically powered and listed by Underwriters Laboratories (UL) or approved by Factory Mutual (FM). Tags or labels indicating the device has been tested and approved by either of these agencies can be found on the electrical cord or die stamped on the heater itself.
- Fuel powered (propane, kerosene) space heaters are not permitted.
- The heater must have a thermostat for heat regulation. The heater's thermostat will sense that the area has reached a certain temperature and reduce heating until the temperature in the area drops (very much like the thermostat in your house). Heaters without this feature (with simple "on/off" or "high/low" switches) continue to heat without any regulation and can easily cause fires.
- Approved heaters must be fan driven. Space heaters with heated metal coils are not permitted. A guard or screen must cover the heating element.
- Space heaters must have a tip-over shutdown feature. If the heater is knocked over, the unit must automatically shut off.

Approved space heaters may be used only if the following conditions are met:

- **Heaters shall not be used in areas where flammable liquids are in use or storage.**
- The heater may only be located on the floor. Heaters located on filing cabinets, tables, desks or equipment are more susceptible to being knocked over, resulting in accidents or fires.
- Never place anything on top of a space heater.
- At least 3 feet of clearance must be maintained around the heater at all times. Combustible materials like paper, plastic, and cloth must be kept away from the heater.
- Electric cords must be kept out of foot traffic paths to prevent tripping. Extension cords are not recommended, but if one must be used the extension cord wiring must be rated #12 or #14AWG.
- The heater must be unplugged (not just turned off) any time the room or area being heated is unoccupied, especially at the end of the workday.
- Do not locate a space heater in bathrooms or moist areas.

The Indiana University Office of Insurance, Loss Control & Claims reserves the right to inspect and approve or reject any space heater that creates a hazard or is inappropriate to a particular location based on specific circumstances and/or fire safety code requirements.

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## Sanctions

Any use of a space heater in violation of this policy may result in corrective action procedures contained in Indiana University's staff, academic, or student policies, as applicable.

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## History

This policy was established on January 2, 2000.