

IN-13-14-1

Approved by Vice-Chancellor: 4-1-2014

Use of Portable Indoor Space Heaters

University of Wisconsin System buildings are operated under University of Wisconsin System and State of Wisconsin policies and regulations. The use of indoor space heaters is strictly limited due to risk of fire and concerns for energy consumption.

The personal use of space heaters on the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay is not allowed due to risk of fire and concerns for energy consumption. Space heaters create an energy drain because the heat produced in one area upsets normal operation of building HVAC systems causing uncomfortable conditions for others.

At all times appropriate adjustment of the building heating system will be the preferred option for meeting the heating needs for employees, students and guests in UWGB Buildings. Only when this is found by facilities staff to be infeasible, campuses shall have the authority to approve the use of certain space heaters in limited circumstances and at the sole discretion of the Department of Facilities Management and Planning.

Definition:

Space heater: A space heater is a self-contained device for heating an enclosed area.

Scope:

This policy applies to all buildings located on the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Campus and is applicable to all staff and students.

Limited use

Appropriate adjustment of the building heating system should always be the preferred option for meeting the heating needs for employees, students and guests in UW System buildings. When this is infeasible, campuses shall have the authority to approve the use of certain space heaters in limited circumstances.

Under the explicit approval from the Department of Facilities and Planning, a space heater may be implemented in the following cases;

Target temperature not maintained

If the central building heat system is unable to maintain a target work temperature, it may be determined that it is necessary to allow a space heater for temporary, supplemental heat until the comfort concern can be permanently resolved.

Specific health needs

The reason for the exemption should be documented. For example, if there is a medical reason, a document from a medical provider should be provided.

Other extenuating circumstances

The designee of the Department of Facilities and Planning has the authority to grant permission for use in other circumstances that may require the temporary use of portable indoor space heaters.

Requests for use must be made in writing and delivered to _____. Prior to any use, the requestor must receive written permission from the Department of Facilities Management and Planning.

Safety and use requirements for space heaters

It is essential to ensure the safe and responsible use of the portable space heater in order to reduce the risk of fire; to utilize a space heater for temporary, supplemental heat, all of the following requirements are mandatory:

1. Unit must be approved by the Facilities Management staff.
2. Unit can only be used in an office space.
3. Unit must be electric and plugged directly into a hard wired wall socket (no extension cords or power strips)
4. Unit must be continuously supervised by office space “owner.” Do not leave the unit “on” when the office is unoccupied under any circumstances.
5. Space heaters must be kept at least 3 feet away from any combustible materials such as files, curtains, plastic storage bins, and waste baskets.
6. Unit must be a “Listed Heater” with Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. (look for the UL Listing symbol on the bottom or the back of the unit). 
7. Unit must not exceed 1000watts.
8. Unit must have a thermostat that shuts off the unit when a certain temperature is reached.
9. Unit must have a safety tip-over switch to turn the unit off if it is tipped over.
10. Heating element must not exceed 212° F.
11. The local fire inspector may further restrict use of portable indoor space heaters per local fire code or ordinance

Department/Unit Responsibilities

This policy will be enforced by Facilities Management and Planning. Any portable space heaters found to be in violation of the requirements of this policy will be subject to immediate removal. Campus custodial staff will continue to take the following steps when space heaters are found in individual offices during the course of their normal work activities.

1st Time: Place the space heater on the individual’s desk. (If you personally own the unit, this will be your last opportunity to take it home before having it removed).

2nd Time: Remove the space heater from the individual’s office. (Requests to regain possession of units that are personal property should be forwarded to Paul Pinkston, Director of Facilities.)

