

FIRE PREVENTION: SPACE HEATERS



This talk covers safe practices that employees should follow when using space heaters in the workplace.

Materials to have on hand:

- A small electric space heater to demonstrate what to look for during inspection and how to safely use it
- Manufacturer’s instructions for the space heater
- A copy of your employer’s policy or guidelines for using space heaters
- A copy of the facility fire prevention plan, if applicable

Items for attendees to consider during the talk:

- What is your employer’s policy on using space heaters in the workplace?
- Have you read all the manufacturer’s instructions and warnings for your space heater before using it?
- Are you using your space heater safely?

TALK

Portable electric space heaters provide an inexpensive and effective way to keep your office or work space warm during the colder months. If

used improperly, however, space heaters can pose a significant risk of fire. Each year, thousands of fires result from the unsafe use of space heaters.

Fortunately, there are things you can do to prevent space heater fires. First and foremost, always read and follow the manufacturer’s instructions for the heater you are using. They may include safety precautions specific to that model. In general, stick to the following guidelines when using a portable space heater to make sure you stay warm—and safe.

- Make sure your space heater has a label showing it has been certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory.
- Before each use, inspect the heater for any signs of damage, such as a frayed cord or broken plug. If you see any signs of damage, do not use the heater.
- Plug the heater directly into a wall outlet, not into a power strip or an extension cord, which can overheat and cause a fire.
- Place the heater on a flat, level surface. Never place heaters on top of tables, filing cabinets, or other furniture.
- Place the heater in a spot with low foot traffic, where it will not pose a tripping hazard.

Continued on page 2

.....

Talk Date: _____	Attendees: _____
Location: _____	_____
_____	_____
Supervisor/ Presenter: _____	Comments: _____

FIRE PREVENTION: SPACE HEATERS

- Make sure the heater is placed at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn, such as rugs and office paper.
- Never leave your space heater unattended when it is on. Turn it off before you leave the room.
- Before leaving work each day, unplug and safely store the heater.

[Address the employer policy on space heaters, and discuss any additional rules employees must follow.]

[Take out the manufacturer's instructions for your space heater, and discuss any specific safety precautions. Also, look at and discuss any safety warning labels on the space heater itself.]

When used in a safe manner, portable electric space heaters are a great source of supplemental heat for your office or work space. Always follow these critical safety guidelines to reduce the risk of fire and keep yourself and your coworkers safe.