



EULESS FIRE DEPARTMENT FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

EFD-FMO 39-2

2015 Edition
International Fire Code
and Building Code as
Amended
NFPA Standards Adopted

INFORMATION LINE: *Space Heaters - Use Of* *Revised 02/12*

Fire Chief Wes Rhodes

Fire Marshal Paul Smith

Scope: This information line is designed to provide guidance in the selection and use of portable space heaters in an office or similar space within a structure. This information line is not all inclusive and you are encouraged to contact the Fire Marshals Office if you have specific questions not addressed herein.

Regulations governing the use of space heaters are scattered throughout the Fire Code. The following is a synopsis of those regulations:

- Portable heaters are prohibited in Group I-2 occupancies. This includes child care facilities, hospitals and nursing homes. (605.10) They are also prohibited in locations for which they are not listed. (605.10.4)
- Adequate clearance must be maintained between heaters and combustible materials. A minimum of three (3) feet of clearance from any combustible material is required. (605.10.4)
- Portable heaters must be maintained in good operating condition, with all safety screens and other safety features attached and operable. Portable heaters must be listed by a recognized testing laboratory and must be of a design that prevents the unit from being tipped over, or be equipped with a functioning tip switch that will turn the unit off if the unit should fall face down. (605.10.1 and 605.10.5)
- Portable unvented fuel-fired heating equipment is prohibited in certain occupancies. Where permitted, they must comply with the manufacturers operating instructions, the *International Building Code*, *International Mechanical Code*, *International Fuel Gas Code* and *National Electrical Codes*.
- The use of electrical powered heaters can not overload the buildings electrical systems or any component thereof. Tripping of breakers is prima facie evidence of an overloaded circuit. (605.1)
- Heaters must be plugged directly into a wall outlet. (605.10.2) The use of adaptors, unfused plug strips and extension cords is prohibited.(605.10.3) Electrical cords may not be attached to the structure, run through walls, ceilings, floors, under doors, be covered with carpeting or any other device not designed and listed for such purpose or be located where subjected to physical or environmental damage. (605)
- Heaters must not be left unattended. Heaters should be turned off and unplugged at the end of the workday as well as at any time the user will not be able to monitor the heater.

Note that this information line provides general information only. Feel free to contact the Fire Marshal's Office at 817-685-1600 if you need further assistance. Note also that the operation of a space heater in violation of the codes is an offense of the law and carries fines of up to \$2,000 and subjects the person operating or permitting the operation of the heater in violation of the law to potential civil liability in the event of a fire resulting from the heater.