



Memorandum

DAS Policy on Portable Space Heater Use

Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Facilities Management is committed to providing a safe, comfortable and energy efficient working environment in our state buildings. Therefore, DAS does not provide portable space heaters and generally discourages their use because of the significant fire hazards and/or shock hazards and additional energy consumption they can present.

DAS Facilities Management **may, however, permit the use of electric space heaters on a case by case basis**, as long as the property manager reviews location to be used and concurs with the need for their use in order to provide reasonable individual comfort to the building's occupant(s). A property manager should first attempt to rectify any heating problems by correcting or improving the building mechanical systems involved or, by working with the agency to relocate an individual if the problem could be resolved in that manner.

A property manager and supervision have full authorization to eliminate the use of any portable electric unit unless the *user* fully understands and complies with all of the following:

- Only UL (Underwriters Laboratory) or FM (Factory Mutual) rated portable electric heaters will be allowed for use when and if approved. Heater should be properly marked and safety tag or marking visible.
- Users must strictly adhere to all manufacturer's instructions for proper and safe use along with required operational or preventative maintenance. Users must read fully and become familiar with the manufacturer's instruction booklet and have it available for review by the property manager.
- Use of extension cords with portable heaters should be avoided. Electrical space heaters should be plugged directly into an electrical outlet. If an extension cord must be used with the space heater, consult the manufacturer's instructions and/or operator's manual to ensure that the extension cord is of the correct wire gauge size, etc. for the type of space heater. (Extension cord must be UL or FM approved with tag/markings visible) Both the heater's plug and cord, and the extension cord should be regularly inspected for excessive wear. Note: extension cords may only be used on a temporary basis.
- Space heaters approved for use by property management should be equipped with "safety features" including safety cut-off switches, element guards, and on/off indicator lights, among other features.
- Location of space heaters, should be at least three feet from combustibles, placed on floors and never located on furniture where they may fall, causing possible damage to the heater components. Follow the manufacturer's instructions when locating and placing a portable electric space heater into service. Never attempt to replace parts or repair an electric space heater. Again, the manufacturer's recommended procedure for repairs etc...should be always adhered to without exception.



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
Bureau of Properties and Facilities Management
Division of Facilities Planning and Technical Services
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 1403, Hartford, CT 06103

- Always turn off and unplug portable electric space heaters when leaving the area for an extended time period. Never leave an electric portable space heater on while left unattended for an excessive period and never use portable electric space heaters in wet, or moist places (including bathrooms) unless the type of heater is designed and certified for that purpose.
- Do not hide cords under rugs or carpet, in case the cord overheats. And, whenever possible, electric portable space heaters should be plugged into outlets protected by ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). If the electric portable space heater repeatedly “trips” the GFCI, it should be checked by a qualified service center before being placed back in use.
- Portable electric space heaters should not be used in areas where young children would have access (supervised or unsupervised) since, severe burns, electric shock, or fire ignition may occur if they either come in direct contact with the heater’s element - heating coil, protective guard, plug or cord.