

Appendix A

Use of Portable Space Heaters

Slippery Rock University recognizes that individuals have different levels of comfort associated with temperature.

As set forth in the SRU Energy & Resource Conservation Policy, the use of space heaters in College facilities, except for emergency use as noted below, is prohibited for safety and occupant comfort reasons. Space heaters are only allowed if an exception has been made and the specific equipment has been reviewed and approved by Environmental Health & Safety/Emergency Management

Whether they are purchased by the University or are personal property, two issues affect the use of space heaters in campus buildings - fire safety and energy efficiency. All space heaters used on campus must be approved for fire safety, as classified by the National Fire Protection Association. No liquid fueled space heaters (e.g., kerosene heaters) shall be used in any residential, office, classroom or research buildings. The presence of an electric space heater represents a fire hazard and significant risk if left unattended while on and/or placed too close to flammable/combustible materials. All space heaters must meet the following four specifications:

1. Be Underwriter Laboratories (UL) approved
2. Have heating elements that are protected from contact
3. Be tilt-proof (when tipped over, heater goes off)
4. Be thermostat-controlled.

The issue of energy efficiency is also important - electric space heaters are a very costly means of heating. If a member of the campus community feels that a space heater is necessary for adequate comfort, this may indicate that the central heating system needs repair. The Office of Facilities and Planning should be consulted if the central heating system is incapable of meeting comfort requirements. Energy star appliances will be used whenever possible and as new technologies become available.

The use of space heaters can upset normal operation of building HVAC systems causing uncomfortable conditions for space occupants and those in nearby spaces. For example, the use of a space heater in a room with a thermostat can cause the building temperature control system to increase the flow of cool air in order to reduce the temperature at the thermostat. The individual using the space heater will feel heat from the space heater and cool air from the supply diffuser in their room. Other occupants of the same zone will only feel cool air from the supply diffuser in their room. Thus, a space heater used in a room with the zone thermostat can reduce the temperature of the remaining spaces in that zone. State regulations require that the University follow ASHRAE Standard 90.1, which states that heating and cooling are not allowed simultaneously in the same space for the sole purpose of achieving comfort.

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