

# Space Heaters

## Considerations for the Selection & Use of Space Heaters

Before a space heater can be used, a few things need to be considered.

1. Is the thermostat in the work area set to the appropriate temperature?
2. Is the work area too cold because the building's systems are not working properly? Contact Fixit (x77301) to confirm that there isn't a building problem that PPS can resolve.
3. Can the electrical circuit handle the increased load of a space heater? The increased load may result in a tripped breaker and the sudden loss of power to computers and other electrical devices

If the above items have been addressed, then a space heater meeting the following conditions may be used:

- The heater must be electrically powered. Fuel powered (propane, kerosene) space heaters are not permitted.
- The heater must be listed by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC) or other regulatory agency. Labels indicating the device has been tested and approved by one of these agencies must be on the electrical cord or on the heater itself. Review the Electrical Equipment Certification SOP for information on safety labels and approvals. [www.safety.queensu.ca/safety/policy/eh&s/ElectricalEquipmentCertification.pdf](http://www.safety.queensu.ca/safety/policy/eh&s/ElectricalEquipmentCertification.pdf)
- The heater must have a thermostat to shut down the unit when the desired temperature is achieved, Heaters with simple "on/off" or "high/low" switches continue to heat without any regulation and can easily cause fires.
- Space heaters must have a tip-over protection which turns off the heater if it is knocked over.
- A guard or screen must cover the heating element.
- Heated open coil radiant heaters are not permitted.





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## SAFETY BULLETIN

Approved space heaters may still pose a fire risk if not used safely.

- Keep heaters away from aisles and paths of travel. Electric cords must be kept out of foot traffic paths to prevent tripping.
- Never place anything on top of a space heater.
- At least 3 feet of clearance must be maintained around the heater at all times. Combustible materials like paper, plastic, and cloth must be kept away from the heater.
- Space heaters must not be placed under desks where they may inadvertently be kicked and come in contact with electrical cords or combustibles.
- The heater may only be located on the floor. A heater located on filing cabinets, tables, desks or equipment is more susceptible to being knocked over, resulting in accidents or fires.
- The heater's cord should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. Extension cords are not recommended, but if one must be used, the extension cord wiring must be appropriately rated.
- The heater must be unplugged (not just turned off) any time the room or area being heated is unoccupied, especially at the end of the workday.

### **For More Information Contact:**

**Environmental Health and Safety**  
**Queen's University**  
**(613) 533-2999**  
[www.safety.queensu.ca](http://www.safety.queensu.ca)