

# Space Heater Policy

## The University of Texas at Tyler

### General:

Three significant issues govern the use of space heaters in campus buildings — fire safety, electrical loads, and energy efficiency. First, 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. Second, if someone feels that a space heater is necessary for adequate warmth, this may indicate that the central heating system needs repair. The UT Tyler Power Plant should be consulted if the central heating system seems incapable of meeting comfort requirements. If the UT Tyler Power Plant is unable to adjust heating conditions in the affected area, Physical Plant Department personnel will determine whether the electrical load carrying capacity is sufficient for adding an approved space heater to the area. Last but certainly not least, energy efficiency is also very important. Electric space heaters can be a very costly means of heating.

### Usage Guidelines:

- Dress appropriately for the weather using layers of clothing to avoid becoming chilled when going from car to office or in between buildings.
- Always read and follow the manufacturers' operating instructions before operating a space heater.
- Always turn off the space heater or unplug it when you leave the office for an extended period (i.e., for a meeting, for lunch, and at the end of the day). Note: Any space heater found activated for extended periods of time with no personnel in the area, after-hours or on weekends, etc. will be removed.
- The space heater must be the grounded type and have a cord with a three-prong plug. It must have the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) listing mark.
- The space heater must cut itself off if tipped over.
- The space heater must be thermostat-controlled and have elements that are protected from contact.
- The space heater must be clean and not covered with dust. The cord must be in good condition and not frayed.
- Do not use a space heater where flammable or explosive vapors or dust may be present.
- Do not use a space heater where toxic or radioactive materials may be present.
- Do not place a space heater near combustible materials such as papers, magazines, drapes, or office furniture. Follow manufacturer guidelines for placement of the heater. If you do not have these guidelines, be sure to provide at least 36 inches of clearance in front of the heater and 18 inches clearance around the sides and back.
- Do not plug a space heater into an extension cord or power strip. It should be plugged directly into a permanent wall outlet.
- Never run a power cord under a carpet or floor mat.

**Recommended Space Heater:**

The recommended space heater at UT Tyler is the “Cozy Legs” radiant heat panel. This unit has been deemed most appropriate considering the three issues outlined above. These units may be purchased with departmental M&O funds. To insure proper installation, the UT Tyler Physical Plant Department should install these units via work order.

**Existing Space Heaters:**

If you have an existing space heater, please contact the UT Tyler Office of Environmental Health and Safety for an inspection of the unit. If deemed unsatisfactory, the unit must be removed or will be confiscated. If deemed satisfactory, the unit may remain until it needs to be replaced. At that time, the recommended unit should be acquired.