



DATE: November 20, 2006

TO: All Departments

FROM: Joseph Leung, University Fire Marshal
Department of Environmental Health and Safety

SUBJECT: Use of Portable Electric Heaters

As the cold weather approaches, many occupants of our University buildings may tend to utilize portable electric heaters. If members of your staff wish to use portable heaters, please inform them of the following recommendations:

- Portable electric heaters shall be listed and approved by Underwriter's Laboratories, Inc. (UL).
- Portable electric heaters should be the fail-safe types, which are equipped with an automatic tip-over safety shut-off switch.
- Portable electric heaters should be placed at least 3 feet (1 meter) away from paper, curtains, furniture, clothing, bedding or anything else that can burn. Please pay particular attention to the clearances as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Never leave your electric heater running when you leave the room or area or when you go to sleep.
- Ensure everyone is aware of the high fire hazard associated with drying clothes or placing combustibles over heaters.
- Wherever possible, plug your electric heater directly into a wall outlet, without using an extension cord.
- If a wall outlet is not available, utilizing a strip plug that is equipped with a circuit breaker switch is the safest alternative.
- Do not extend the electric cord of the heater through wall openings, under doors or floor coverings. Arrange the cord away from traffic areas where it will not be tripped over or otherwise subject to damage.
- Do not operate an electric heater with a damaged cord or plug or after the heater malfunctions or has been dropped or damaged in any manner.

In the event further information is needed in regards to the use of portable electric heaters or other fire safety related issues, please do not hesitate to call our office at 3-0609 or 3-5099 and we will assist in any way possible.

Thank You and Happy Holidays