



Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust

INJURY PREVENTION

Quick Review of Safety

Portable Heaters: Fire Prevention

- Heaters should be electric or radiant only. They should not have open flames or exposed heating elements, nor should they produce carbon monoxide.
- Portable heaters should be certified from an independent testing laboratory, such as UL (Underwriter's Laboratory).
- Heaters should be equipped with a high-temperature-limiting device and tip-over protection that cuts the power should they fall over.
- Place portable heaters at least three feet away from combustible materials, such as paper, curtains, clothing, rugs or desks.
- Position portable heaters outside of high-traffic areas to limit tripping hazards. Position the cords outside of walking paths.
- As a general rule, plug portable heaters directly into wall outlets. Many extension cords or power strips use cords that are not designed for the amperage required to operate a heater and may overheat.
 - Using power strips with portable heaters increases the risk of overloading the breaker, as more items are plugged into the power strip. Power strips and surge protecting power strips are only rated for use with small amperage equipment, such as computers and monitors.
- Heaters with damaged or frayed wiring or cords should not be used. They should be removed from service.
- Do not leave portable heaters unattended. When leaving your work space at the end of the day or for long periods, turn off and unplug the heater.
- Avoid placing portable heaters near thermostats.



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