**ELECTRIC SPACE HEATER FACT SHEET**

Electric space heaters, when used properly, can provide an additional degree of comfort over and above a facility’s heating system. Unfortunately, with the use of these heaters comes the increased risk of fire and potential injury. Additionally, in support of the Governor of Montana’s set goal of reducing energy consumption in State Facilities and UM President’s memo of August 29, 2008 setting out steps to reduce energy consumption on campus, UM Facilities Energy Consumption procedures require that all electric heater usage be authorized and approved by Facilities Services. Therefore, it is necessary to establish and maintain strict guidelines for the use of such appliances.

* Any supplementary electric heating must be preapproved and provided by UM Facilities Services, except for non-state facilities. Notify the Facilities Services Work Order Desk at ext. 6091 rather than bringing in your own space heater.
* The space heater selected must be tested by an independent testing laboratory such as Underwriter’s Laboratories (UL). The units need to be listed by and labeled by the testing organization.
* The unit must have thermostatic controls and automatic shutoff features. The unit must be equipped with a safety switch which automatically shuts off the heater if the unit is tipped over.
* The space heater must have a three prong grounded plug (preferred) or polarized plug.
* Space heaters should *always* be plugged into an approved receptacle, never into extension cords - the high current flow can cause excessive heating that could cause a fire.
* Never run the heater’s cord (or any cord) under rugs, carpeting or furniture.
* Turn off the heater when you leave the room - **unplug** the heater when you leave for the day.
* Electric space heaters must not be operated within 3 ft. of any combustible material. The leading causes of space heater fires are combustibles too close to the heater.
* Nothing should ever be placed on top of or touching a space heater.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) collects information on problems with electric space heaters. For the latest information, go to <http://www.cpsc.gov>. Listed below are some of the recent recalls on space heaters, 12/22/2011.

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| Product | Hazard | Photo |
| Meijer Touch Point Oscillating Ceramic Heaters (13,000 units) | The oscillating mechanism in the heaters can short out, posing a fire hazard to consumers. | Click For Larger Image |
| Flow Pro, Airtech, Aloha Breeze & Comfort Essentials Heaters(2.2 million units) | The heaters can malfunction resulting in overheating, smoking, burning, melting and fire. | Click For Larger Image |
| Lasko Portable Electric Heaters(107,500 units) | An electrical connection in the base of the unit can overheat, causing it to melt and expose the electrical connection, posing a fire hazard to consumers. | Click For Larger Image |