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ELECTRICAL SAFETY FACT SHEET

SPACE HEATER SAFETY

Portable electric space heaters are an excellent supplementary source of heat for cold rooms, but they aren't intended to replace your home's heating system. In fact, if used incorrectly, space heaters can pose fire and burn risks.

Follow these safety precautions from the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) to get the best - and safest - results from your portable electric space heaters;

- Read and follow carefully the manufacturer's warning markings, and use and care manual before using a space heater.
- Space heaters need space. Keep flammable materials including bedding, clothing, draperies, rugs and furniture at least three feet away from the heater.
- Don't use space heaters around unsupervised children and pets.
- Don't poke fingers or other objects through the heater's protective guards. Even the slightest contact with a heating coil or element can cause a severe burn, shock or fire.
- Don't leave space heaters unattended. Turn off your space heater and unplug it when leaving the room or going to sleep.
- Avoid using extension cords with space heaters. If you must use one, make sure you choose the right wire gauge, or size, and type for your heater, and make sure it and the heater's power cord are not fraying or cracking. If so, throw it out and replace it.
- Electric space heaters use a lot of electricity. To avoid a circuit overload, plug it into a circuit that is not already burdened by other appliances and fixtures.
- Keep the space heater's power supply cord away from high traffic areas in your home to prevent a tripping hazard, but do not run a space heater's power cord under a carpet, rug or furniture. This could cause the cord to overheat and cause a fire.
- Water and electricity don't mix! Use only those space heaters marked as approved for such locations as bathroom and the outdoors. If this information is missing, don't use the heater in either of these areas.