Safe Use of
Portable Space Heaters

**Electric Space Heaters**

![Electric Space Heater]

To protect your family and your home, you should only purchase space heaters labeled as “Underwriter’s Laboratory (U.L.) Listed” and that has an automatic shut off switch.

Space heaters should also have a tilt switch, which will automatically turn the unit off if it happens to tip over.

Space Heaters must be fully enclosed by a guard around the heating coil. This will prevent fingers or fabrics from touching the hot coil, and prevent no external surfaces reaching temperatures capable of starting a fire.

Space heaters must be plugged directly into an electrical outlet with a 3-prong plug. Do not use light-duty extension cords or multi-outlet strip/surge protectors. Extension cords and surge protectors can start fires because space heaters draw high amounts of wattage.

Only place the space heater on a level surface, away from foot traffic.

Keep the space heater at least 3 feet away from combustible items such as drapes and furniture. Keeping a heater too close to these items is the number one cause of space heater fires.

Never use a space heater as a dryer for clothing, wet towels, etc.

Look for a heater with an automatic timer, which will shut the heater off after heating is complete.

Unplug the heater when not in use

Do not hide the cord under a rug or carpet, this can cause the core to overheat and start a fire.

Never allow pets or children near an electric heater. Accidental contact could result in serious shock or burns.

**Gas/Oil filled Space Heaters**

![Gas/Oil Filled Space Heater]

Your gas space heater should be properly ventilated.

Be sure the vent pipe has no cracks, is not too small and is not clogged. These problems can be very hazardous and can lead to carbon monoxide gas leaking out.

If you must have an unventilated heater, keep a door or window slightly open at all times to prevent accumulation of carbon monoxide.

Light the match before you turn on the gas, to prevent accumulation of gas. (This will prevent gas from flaring up when you bring the match near).

Remember that a space heater can ignite liquids & vapors.

Never us the space heater where gasoline is stored.

Never use a space heater where paint thinners, kerosene, or other volatile liquids are being used.

Use only the fuel for which the heater was designed.

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*Edison Department of Health & Human Services*