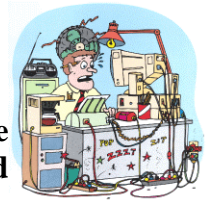


Space Heater Guidelines & Office Electrical Safety

Electricity is an essential power source in modern, automated offices. However, electrical equipment is potentially hazardous and can cause serious shock and burn injuries if improperly used or maintained. Electrical accidents usually occur as a result of faulty or defective equipment, unsafe installation, or misuse of equipment by office workers.



Use of Electrical Space Heaters:

As the cold weather sets in, many employees choose to supplement the heating in the office with electric space heaters. Because of safety reasons, the County has implemented the following procedures and guidelines:

- Department Heads or their designee, as well as the Director of Facilities Management, must give approval for the use of an electric space heater. It must be tagged accordingly.
- Only space heaters that have been tested and certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory, meeting specific safety standards, may be used.
- The heaters must have automatic safety switches that turn off if it is accidentally tipped over.

Once this criteria is met, the guidelines for use are:

- Space heaters may be used between November 1st and March 1st.
- The heater must be kept at least three feet away from anything that may be flammable.
- The heater must not be plugged into an extension cord.
- All space heaters must be unplugged before going home for the day.

To prevent electrical accidents in your office environment:

Use only safe and approved equipment

- Do not use or bring to work coffee makers, radios, lamps, etc., which are poorly maintained, unsafe, or low in quality and not approved by a national testing laboratory.
- Do not overload electrical outlets.

Monitor electrical cords for defects and improper installation

- Electrical cords should be examined on a routine basis for fraying and for exposed wiring.
- Electrical cords should never be placed on radiators, steam pipes, walls, or windows.

Use extension cords safely

- Extension cords should only be used in situations where fixed wiring is not feasible. If it is necessary to use an extension cord, never run it across walkways or aisles due to the potential tripping hazard.
- If you must run a cord across a walkway, either tape it down or cover it with a cord runner.

Do not work on “live equipment”

- Disconnect electrical machines before cleaning, adjusting, or applying flammable solutions.
- If a guard is removed to clean or repair parts, replace it before testing the equipment and returning the machine to service.

Report any unsafe electrical cords and equipment to your supervisor immediately

- Only qualified individuals should make repairs to faulty cords and equipment

SPACE HEATERS

The Government Services Building Manager must approve portable space heating units before they are put into use.



A space-heating unit must be turned off and disconnected whenever you leave the area where it is being used.

West Chester/GSC Safety Committee

For more information or safety concerns contact Jack Smith at 610-344-5223