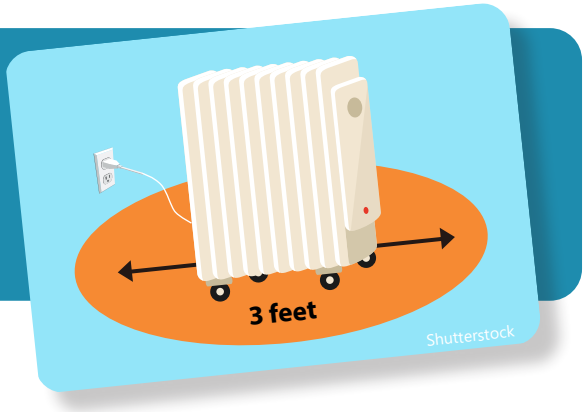
Space Heater Fire Safety



Space Heater Fires

Most space heater fires occur when flammable items such as bedding, clothing, or furniture are too close to the heater. They can also happen when the heater is plugged into an extension cord or power strip.

Safety Tips

If you must use a space heater for heat, use it as safely as possible.

- When buying a heater, choose one that has been tested and labeled by a nationally recognized testing company, such as Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) or Intertek (ETL).
- Keep the heater 3 feet away from drapes, furniture, or other flammable materials.
- Select a space heater that has an automatic shut-off switch that turns the device off if it tips over.
- Always plug a space heater directly into a wall outlet, not a power strip or extension cord.
- Place the heater on a level surface away from areas where someone might bump into it and knock it over.
- Never leave a space heater unattended or running while you sleep.
- Supervise children and pets when a space heater is in use.
- Keep electric heaters away from water. Never use them near a sink or in the bathroom.
- Portable kerosene and propane heaters are illegal for home use in Massachusetts.

Always plug a space heater directly into a wall outlet, not a power strip or extension cord.

Department of Fire Services
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