



Portable Heaters

Work must carry on year-round, through low temperatures, high winds, dampness, and cold water, which can cause outdoor workers cold-related stress and rapid loss of heat. Temporary heating devices are important for allowing workers to work effectively and comfortably during these conditions. It's also important to understand how to prevent worker injury and property damage from burns, carbon monoxide poisoning, oxygen deficient atmospheres, as well as potential fires or explosions caused by selecting and using temporary heating devices incorrectly.

Follow these safe work practices to avoid the fires and injuries that portable heaters can cause:

- Always follow the manufacturer's installation and operating instructions.
- Inspect portable gas and electric heaters on a regular basis and clean them often to make sure they are in safe working condition.
- Never use a defective heater.
- Put the heater on a stable, level surface away from foot traffic.
- Enforce a 3-foot exclusion zone around heaters.
- Keep all combustibles like wood, plastics, cardboard, sawdust, paper, and clothes away from the heater.
- Don't use extension cords to power portable heaters. Using extension cords increases the likelihood of fire due to overloading and inductive heating.
- Keep propane tanks upright, on a firm and level surface that is at least six feet from the heater.
- Never leave a portable heater unattended if it's running. Shut it down before you leave.
- Avoid getting shocked or electrocuted: keep portable electric heaters away from water and damp locations.
- Use portable gas heaters with adequate ventilation. They can produce dangerous amounts of carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxide if not vented properly.
- Never use flammable liquids around portable heaters. Vapors or a spill could cause a flash fire.
- Protect all hoses from extreme heat and physical damage (including being pinched by a non-secured doorway or window) to ensure gas is able to easily flow to the heater.
- Never run a heater's cord under a rug, mat, or carpet.
- Never use gasoline as a fuel source.
- Always refuel portable heaters outside and clean up spills immediately.
- When you buy a heater, choose one with a tip-over safety switch that



automatically shuts the heater off if it gets tipped over.

On a cold day, when you go into the warm-up area, remember to keep clear of the heater. It's human nature to get nice and close to the heater to warm your legs and back. But if you stand too close, your clothing can catch on fire. Always be aware of your surroundings so you don't go up in flames.

SAFETY REMINDER

Only qualified personnel should fix a broken heater. An improperly repaired heater is a fire waiting to happen.