

## Policy 5-310 CO-CS-PO1

### Space Heaters and High-Current Small Appliances Use in UT Arlington Facilities

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#### I. **Title**

Space Heaters and High-Current Small Appliances Use in UT Arlington Facilities

#### II. **Policy**

##### A. **Policy Statement**

The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to providing a comfortable and productive environment for all campus users, while also continuing to follow best-practices for stewardship of utilities resources. Space heaters are generally prohibited on campus due to fire and life safety concerns. However, they may be permitted in extreme circumstances on a case-by-case basis, and in good faith compliance with the safety restrictions noted in this policy. Short-term heating needs in residence halls, apartments, and houses necessary to achieve a safe living environment will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Office of Facilities Management (OFM) and in accordance with the Housing Lease. Heaters are not allowed in housing units of any type without approval from the Housing Office and OFM. Heaters in all other University buildings must be approved by OFM as outlined below. Small appliances are also addressed in this policy.

##### B. **Rationale**

1. Comfortable working conditions are necessary for productive campus operations. However, unsafe supplemental heating equipment, such as a plug-in space heater, poses many safety risks which may result in fires, utilities/infrastructure outages, and related disruptions. In addition, these heaters are not controlled by the campus Energy Management Controls System and often result in significant waste of energy. Small

appliances may overload electrical capacities in certain areas and must be approved as well.

2. This policy establishes restrictions relating to and conditions under which space heaters and certain small appliances are permitted to be used in UT Arlington facilities. To afford flexibility, this policy also provides a process for obtaining permission for their use and protocol for their safe use and operation.

### C. Overall Restrictions

1. Open-coil electric resistance space heaters are prohibited. These types are also often referred to as "hot element" or "infrared" heaters.
2. Space heaters of any type are prohibited in laboratories at all times.
3. Liquid (oil) filled convection-type space heaters in capacities of 1,000 watts or less and low-wattage (750 watts or less) fan-equipped convection heaters will be considered for approval. Use of heaters will only be granted for extenuating circumstances with prior written permission from the OFM. Examples of extenuating circumstances may include documented health issues, safety considerations, research requirements, or in areas where temperatures of at least 68°F cannot be maintained during severely cold inclement weather and necessary retrofits to existing building infrastructure are prohibitively expensive. Requests for use of such heaters should be directed to OFM by emailing [wosc@uta.edu](mailto:wosc@uta.edu). Include "Space Heater Request" in the email subject. Requests for a heater as an accommodation for a health issue should be directed to the University ADA coordinator. Heaters found on campus, that are not approved to be in place, are a violation of this policy and will be removed by OFM personnel.
4. All approved heaters must include the following features and be operated as follows:
  - a. Heater must be convection/radiator-type. Oil-filled heaters must have a capacity of 1,000 watts or less; forced-air convection heaters must be rated at 750 watts total capacity or less. Heater must be UL labeled rated and incorporate auto shut-off safety features in the event of malfunction, over-heating, or tipping. Heater must have built-in adjustable thermostat. Two-stage heaters are preferred.
  - b. Heaters must be maintained at least 3 feet (36 inches) from combustible materials, placed outside of paths of travel (walkways, exit paths, etc.), and may not be located underneath desks or in other enclosed areas.
  - c. Heaters may only be plugged directly into a wall receptacle. Never use heaters with extension cords or power strips.
  - d. Heaters are to be shut off any time the served area is not occupied. This requirement is the sole responsibility of the

occupant. Heaters left on in unoccupied areas will be removed and disallowed going forward.

- e. Malfunctions such as strange odors, dimming of lights, and other operational problems should be reported immediately to OFM at 817-272-2000.
5. Where long-term comfort problems exist (longer than one week and/or inside extreme outdoor temperatures between 10°F-25°F), OFM (817-272-2000) should be contacted by the user for review by OFM of the heating/cooling infrastructure for feasibility of modifications.
6. OFM will stock a limited number of heaters for temporary use when heating is insufficient in certain spaces. However, for individual exceptional needs such as those defined above, occupants will typically be required to procure an approved heater.
7. Other high-current small appliances, including but not limited to microwaves, toasters, coffee makers, hair dryers, etc., are not permitted for use in office areas unless the OFM determines sufficient electrical capacity is available and provides prior written permission. Requests for use of such appliances should be directed to OFM by emailing [wosc@uta.edu](mailto:wosc@uta.edu). Include "High-Current Small Appliance Request" in the email subject. Such appliances will be removed by OFM when found to be present in spaces not designed for such electrical loads and are causing electrical circuits to be overloaded.
8. In cases where temperature accommodations are required due to health issues, and building infrastructure will not support the operation of a heater, the University ADA Coordinator or appropriate Dean, or Director, or Administrator will be consulted to determine if the staff or faculty member requires relocation or other accommodations.

**III. Definitions**

N/A

**IV. Relevant Federal and State Statutes**

N/A

**V. Relevant UT System Policies, Procedures and Forms**

N/A

**VI. Who Should Know**

All individuals utilizing UT Arlington property

**VII. UT Arlington Office(s) Responsible for Policy**

Vice President for Administration and Campus Operations

VIII. **Dates Approved or Amended**

Approved: 03/30/2015

IX. **Contact Information**

All questions and comments regarding this policy should be directed to the Office of Facilities Management.