

# POLICY

## USING SPACE HEATERS IN COUNTY FACILITIES

Effective Date: 08/01/12  
POL 201 FM

Page: 1 of 2  
Approved by: Board of County Commissioners

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is provide criteria for the proper use of space heaters in county facilities to ensure occupant comfort, safe working conditions, and alignment with Kitsap County's energy conservation goals.

### **POL – 201-FM USING SPACE HEATERS IN COUNTY FACILITIES**

This policy applies to all Kitsap County Government facilities.

#### **1. Use of Space Heaters in Kitsap County Facilities**

The use of space heaters is only allowed when authorized by an Elected Official/Department Director or their designee and then verified by Facilities Maintenance or the Parks Department Electrician (for Parks facilities only), per Procedure 201 FM.

#### **2. Conditions for Authorization**

Director/Elected Officials or their designee may authorize the use of space heaters on an individual basis when one or more of the following conditions are met:

- When the County cannot meet heating needs as certified by Facilities Maintenance in consultation with Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning Technicians.
- During temporary emergency conditions.

#### **3. Process for Authorization**

Requests for space heaters shall be processed using PRO 201 FM.

#### **4. Minimum Energy Efficiency and Safety Criteria**

All new space heaters placed into county owned and operated buildings must meet the following criteria:

- Must be high-efficiency personal heating equipment using no more than 400 watts of electricity.
- Must have Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label attached to it.
- Must be equipped with functional safety tip-over switches.
- Must be thermostatically controlled.
- No liquid fueled space heaters (e.g., kerosene) shall be used in any county building.

#### **5. Compliance with All Safety Regulations**

- Prior to use, Facilities Maintenance shall inspect each space heater to determine that it meets all safety requirements.
- Prior to use, the Parks Department Electrician shall inspect each space heater to determine that it meets all safety requirements for Parks Department buildings.

The Electrical Code establishes maximum electrical loads where electrical appliances are connected to receptacles by cords and plugs. To avoid creating a hazardous condition that could cause a fire, only one high use item may be plugged into an outlet since space heaters, refrigerators, toasters, microwaves, and

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Page: 2 of 2  
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coffee makers typically draw a significant amount of current.

### 6. Proper Locations for Space Heaters

- All combustibles, such as books, chairs, and papers, should be at least three (3) feet away from the heater (International Fire Code, Portable, Electric Space Heaters, Section 605.10.4, Prohibited Areas).
- All space heaters must be placed on the floor away from combustibles and foot traffic.
- All space heaters must not block any portion of an exit, exit passageway or high traffic area or restrict egress during a building evacuation event.

### 7. Proper Use of Space Heaters

- All space heaters must be plugged directly into an approved electrical receptacle outlet (International Fire Code, Portable, Electric Space Heaters, Section 605.10.2, Power Supply) and not plugged into an extension cord or power tap or strip (International Fire Code, Portable, Electric Space Heaters, Section 605.10.3, Extension Cords).
- Space heaters must be turned off at the end of each work day.
- Space heaters should be turned off when employees are not in the immediate area for an extended period of time (10 minutes or more).
- Exception: space heaters placed in pipe chases to prevent freezing during the winter. The need for space heaters in pipe chases should be evaluated carefully and they should be removed as soon as freezing is no longer a concern during the season.
- All space heaters must be operated and used according to the manufacturer's operating instructions.
- It is recommended that users read the instructions and warning labels to understand how to operate the heater safely.
- Keep the owners manual in a convenient place to refer to when necessary.

### 8. Existing Space Heaters

- All existing space heaters must be reviewed for compliance with this policy by September 15, 2012.
- Any existing space heaters that do not comply with this policy shall be removed or replaced with compliant space heaters by September 30, 2012.

### 9. Removal of Space Heaters

After September 30, 2012, any non-authorized space heaters in county facilities without a proper "tag" in place may be removed by Facilities Maintenance.

### 10. Use of Space Heaters in Rented or Leased Spaces

Any space heaters used by non-county organizations renting or leasing county owned and operated spaces must adhere to the guidelines set forth in Sections 4-7 above. This information should be included in all rental and lease agreements administered by Kitsap County.