

Lifetime of SAFETY

Safety messages for Texans of all ages



Heating equipment is involved in an estimated 50,000 home fires annually, resulting in the deaths of more than 250 people. According to the National Fire Protection Agency, in 2003, space heaters were involved in 26 percent of home heating fires. Of that 26 percent, nearly three-fourths resulted in fatalities.

Our featured tips this month highlight how to properly use space heaters.

- **Give space heaters their space.** Space heaters pose a higher risk of fire and death than central heating systems. Keep the space heater at least three feet away from anything that can burn, including walls.
- **Unplug the heater** every time you leave the room and when you go to bed.
- **Plug electric-powered space heaters into an outlet** with sufficient capacity and never into an extension cord.
- **Make sure the plug fits snugly in the outlet,** since a loose plug can overheat. If you're using the space heater in the bathroom, be sure to use a ground-fault circuit interrupter. Remember, electricity and water do not mix.
- **Never place a heater on furniture.** Put it on the floor.
- **Don't hide the cord under a rug or carpet.** This can cause the cord to overheat and start a fire.
- **Make sure an independent testing laboratory (Underwriters Laboratories) has approved your new space heater.**

For more information about electrical safety, visit
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