

Category: 400 – Facilities/Equipment

Number: 422

Subject: **PORTABLE ELECTRIC SPACE HEATERS POLICY**

1. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to establish administrative regulations which standardize the procedures utilized by employees in the acquisition and use of portable electric space heaters in individual office/worksite areas.
2. **AUTHORITY:** St. Clair County Board of Commissioners. Administrative policies shall be subject to revision or termination by the Board of Commissioners at its discretion and enforcement by the Administrative/Controller, or designee.
3. **APPLICATION:** The regulations and procedures outlined in this policy are to apply to county elected officials, department heads, employees and all other employees housed within county offices/departments.
4. **RESPONSIBILITY:** The administration of this policy falls under the authority of the St. Clair County Administrator/Controller's office with enforcement by Buildings/Operations and Maintenance.
5. **POLICY:**
 - 5.1 **General Statement(s):**
 - 1) The St. Clair County Administrator/Controller's office recognizes that employees have different levels of comfort associated with temperature and heat. The purpose of this policy is to permit employees to use electric space heaters as a temporary control measure restricted to designated brand and defined applications detailed below under sections 5.2; 5.3; and 5.4.
 - 2) The St. Clair County Administrator/Controller's office and/or designee(s) from Buildings/Operations and Maintenance (BOM) reserve the right to inspect and approve or reject any space heater that creates a hazard or is in inappropriate to a particular location based on specific circumstances and/or fire safety code requirements as detailed below.
 - 5.2 **Acquisition Requirements of Portable Electric Space Heaters:**
 - 1) Portable electric space heaters shall be purchased by an individual employee and must follow all criteria (guidelines and applications) as provided within this policy.
 - 2) The cost incurred for the electric space heaters will be the responsibility of the individual employee.
 - 3) Before purchasing the electric space heater, each employee will:

- a) Need to advise his/her Department Head, or designee, that they will be using an electric space heater in their work area;
 - b) Department Head, or designee, is to remit said list of employees including the specific work area locations to either BOM Superintendent or Safety Committee Coordinator;
 - c) BOM, upon receiving a department's list of employees, will assign a distinctive sticker to be placed on the heater;
 - d) Said sticker will provide/assist BOM staff with the ability to quickly spot check all portable electric heaters ensuring they are compliant.
 - e) Sticker number/employee name/department and specific location of the heater will be tracked by a data base which will indicate that BOM has approved and inspected the heater;
- 4) Unapproved space heaters found by BOM:
- a) First Offense: Department Head, or designee, will receive a "violations" memo with the warning that the unit is not compliant and needs to be removed immediately.
 - b) The non-compliant space heater will be unplugged and put on the employee's desk by BOM staff. This will be the employee's notice that they need to remove said heater from the building.

5.3 General Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Portable Electric Space Heaters Utilized by County Employees:

- 1) St. Clair County requires the following features to be on all space heaters utilized in any and all County facilities:
 - Electric power listed by Underwriters Laboratory (UL)
 - Adjustable thermostat control that maintains constant heat level
 - Fan driven
 - Automatic safety shutoff and tip-over switch
- 2) County Administration and the Safety Committee recommend this specified brand of portable electric space:
Del-Rain LT-2202 Compact Heater with ceramic heating element.
- 3) Any space heater not in compliance with the required features listed in section 5.3.1 will be removed.
- 4) The heater may only be located on the floor. Heaters located on filing cabinets, tables, desks, or equipment are more susceptible to being knocked over.
- 5) Never place anything on top of the space heater.
- 6) Heaters may not be used in areas where flammable liquids are in use or stored.
- 7) At least three (3) feet of clearance must be maintained around the heater at all times. Combustible materials, such as paper, plastic, and cloth must be kept away from the heater.
- 8) Heaters should be connected snugly into a wall receptacle, whenever possible. If you use an extension cord, it must bear the label of an approved testing laboratory such as U.L., or E.T.L., and have a wiring

thickness of at least #14 or #12 (the smaller the number the greater the thickness of the wire).

- 9) Electric cords must be kept out of foot traffic paths to prevent tripping and should never be hidden under rugs or carpets.
- 10) The heater must be unplugged (not just turned off) any time the room or work area being heated is unoccupied, especially at the end of the workday.

5.4 Monitoring Responsibilities

- 1) The responsibility for monitoring the compliance of this Administrative Policy has been assigned to the BOM staff, designee of the Administrator/Controller.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

6.1 Exceptions: Any exceptions or unusual circumstances not provided for in this policy must have specific prior approval from the Administrator/Controller or BOM staff, or if necessary, the Board of Commissioners.

7. ADMINISTRATOR/CONTROLLER & CORPORATION COUNSEL REVIEW:

The Administrator/Controller has determined that this policy, as submitted to the Board of Commissioners, contains the necessary substance in order to carry out the purpose of the policy. Legal Counsel has determined that this policy, as submitted, contains content that appears to be legal activities of the St. Clair County Board of Commissioners.

Adopted: November 28, 2007