



DURHAM REGION NON-PROFIT HOUSING CORPORATION
28A Albert Street
Oshawa, Ontario L1H 8S5
Tel: (905) 436-6610/686-1278
Fax: (905) 436-5361
E-mail: drnphc@durham-housing.com

PROPER SPACE HEATER USE

With the drastic weather changes, freezing temperatures and snowy days there has been an increased need for heat. We understand that some tenants may choose to use a space heater in their unit and while this is not against policy, we ask everyone to exercise extreme caution when using this kind of appliance in your home. Please follow all product instructions and keep product warnings in mind when in use. Below are some important safety rules to remember:

1. Know how your space heater works:

Some of the primary types of space heaters available include mica heaters, ceramic fan-forced heaters, and oil-filled convection heaters, as well as those that use infrared technology.

2. Always supervise your space heaters:

Experts recommend remaining in the room while you use a space heater there—and supervising it closely. This means never using a space heater while you sleep or keeping it on when you leave the room. Leaving a space heater unsupervised increases the chance of creating a fire hazard that can't be immediately stopped in its tracks.

3. Give your space heater space and stability:

For fire safety reasons, leave at least a 3-foot gap between a space heater and any object that can burn, such as rugs, upholstery, curtains, paper, or blankets. Make sure your space heater is secured on flat, solid ground or a hardwood surface so it won't tip over or fall accidentally. Additionally, keep your space heater faced away from any object at all—regardless of whether it's considered flammable or not. This will also allow space heaters to work more efficiently.

4. Keep hot-to-touch heaters away from people and pets:

Don't place a space heater in a high traffic area or hallway—this way, you (or your children or your pets) won't walk or run into it.

5. Make sure there's an automatic shut-off function:

One of the most important features a space heater can have is an auto shut-off safety function. With this feature, space heaters can shut off automatically if any imminent danger is detected. This means if the heater begins to overheat internally or tips over for some reason, the device implements an automatic shut-off to avoid any sort of fire sparking as a result.

6. **Never plug a space heater into a power bar:**

When it comes to powering your space heater, the U.S. Department of Energy recommends always plugging it directly into your wall outlet, avoiding using any power strip or extension cord. A typical space heater may generate up to 1,500 watts of power, so using it with an extension cord—which cannot handle the same wattage as a wall outlet—is a dangerous idea.

7. **Test your smoke detectors regularly:** In your home, condo or apartment, you should always have up-to-date, working smoke alarms. Since space heaters have an inherent risk of potential overheating and fires, it's a good idea to test your smoke detectors and ensure they're working properly before you begin using your space heater.

To ensure the safety of yourself, your family and those around you we ask you to please follow these important safety rules. If you see anyone who is not following these rules please contact your superintendent or property manager immediately.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

Sincerely,

Debbie Craig

Debbie Craig, FMP, AIHM, CLO
Director, Facility Operations
Durham Region Non-Profit Housing Corporation