

UL Reminds Consumers To Use Space Heaters Safely This Heating Season

(NAPS)—Winter weather can bring about dangerously low temperatures and many families may be using portable space heaters in their homes as **supplemental** heat this winter season. But consumers should be aware that space heaters could pose fire or injury hazards if used improperly. According to the safety professionals at Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL), consumers can follow a few simple safety precautions to help reduce injuries and accidents.

- Look for the UL Mark before purchasing a portable space heater. A UL Listing Mark on a product means that representative samples of the product have been tested and evaluated to nationally recognized safety standards with regard to fire, electric shock and related safety hazards.

- Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions found in the use and care booklet that accompanies the product. These instructions contain important safety information that help you use your products safely and maintain them properly.

- Although space heaters on the market today are manufactured with safety features such as cut-off switches or heating element guards, keep combustible materials including bedding, clothing, draperies, rugs and furniture at least three feet away from the heater.

- Keep space heaters away from water. The heater, its box or instruction manual will indicate if a heater is intended for use in locations such as bathrooms or outdoors—if this information isn't included—don't use the heater in either of these areas.

- Don't use space heaters in rooms where children are unsupervised, as children may poke their fingers or other objects through the heater's protective guards. Even the slightest contact with a heating coil or element can cause a severe burn or shock.



- Turn off your space heater and unplug it when leaving a room for an extended period of time or leaving the house.

- Avoid using extension cords with electric space heaters. If you must use one, consult the use and care booklet to make sure you choose an extension cord of the right wire gauge size and type for your heater. Never use a worn or frayed extension cord or a heater that has a worn or frayed cord. This could cause a fire.

- Like other electrical products, space heaters have one function—to provide supplemental heat. Don't use them to warm bedding, cook food, thaw pipes or dry clothing.

Remember, portable space heaters can be an excellent supplementary source of heat for your home, but they aren't intended to replace your home's heating system. By following the above safety precautions, you should get the best—and safest—results from your portable space heater.

Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL) is an independent, not-for-profit product safety testing and certification organization that has tested products for public safety for more than a century. Each year, more than 18 billion UL Marks are applied to products worldwide. For additional safety information, visit UL's Web site at www.ul.com.