



Institutional Handbook of Operating Procedures Policy 08.01.19	
Section: Health, Safety, and Security	Responsible Vice President: Executive Vice President & Chief Financial Officer
Subject: Health and Safety	Responsible Entity: Environmental Health and Safety

I. Title

Portable Heating and Cooking Devices

II. Policy

A. The use of any [portable open element heating device](#), including but not limited to: space heaters, area/room heaters, drink warmers, hot plates, open element (toaster) ovens, and any similar items, are expressly prohibited in all buildings owned or leased by the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston (UTMB).

Specific, approved UTMB-owned space heaters such as certain makes of oil filled space heaters that do not exceed an operation temperature of 212 °F (100 °C) are permitted under extenuating conditions; however, they must be provided by Property Services by contacting the UTMB Service Response Center at 409-772-4040.

UTMB is committed to maintaining a safe environment that complies with all life safety and fire safety regulations. Portable heating devices pose serious fire and electrical hazards which threaten the safety of UTMB occupants and property.

Any planned deviation from this policy will require prior approval from Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) – Life Safety and Environment of Care Compliance.

NOTE: Coffee makers and slice toasters are not included in the intent of this policy. These items must undergo routine cleaning and maintenance.

B. Scope

This policy applies to all owned and leased properties of UTMB Health and applies to all employees, students, patients, and visitors.

This policy does not apply to laboratory areas utilizing typical, standard laboratory equipment which is also a heat-producing device (e.g. Bunsen burners, hot plates, other lab equipment) for institutional purposes.

III. Procedure

- A. It is the responsibility of all supervisors to ensure compliance with this policy. All employees, faculty, students, and volunteers are responsible for:
1. ensuring no portable heating devices are located or used in any building owned or leased by UTMB;
 2. reporting any use of a portable heating device on properties owned or maintained by

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UTMB to EHS at 409-747-0515;

3. dressing appropriately for the weather or work location;
4. contacting the UTMB Service Response Center at 409-772-4040 to report areas that are too hot or too cold;
5. maintaining electrical devices in a clean, operable condition. For example, toasters etc. must be cleaned on a regular basis (i.e. weekly) to prevent debris accumulation and fires; and
6. operating cooking equipment that produces heat in an appropriate manner by:
 - a. monitoring the food while it is cooking, not left unattended;
 - b. using only the power/heat setting necessary for the task;
 - c. using cooking equipment only for its intended purpose and in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.

B. Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) is responsible for:

1. monitoring compliance with this policy;
2. ordering the removal of or removing any portable heating devices found in violation of this policy; and
3. following up on any reports of portable heating device use on properties owned or maintained by UTMB.

C. The assumed need for portable heating devices to provide adequate warmth may indicate a malfunction of the central heating and cooling system and should be brought to the immediate attention of UTMB Property Services by calling 409-772-4040.

III. Related UTMB Policies and Procedures

[IHOP - 08.03.01 - Resource Conservation Policy](#)

[IHOP - 03.01.06 - Personal Appearance](#)

IV. Dates Approved or Amended

<i>Originated:</i> 11/14/2006	
<i>Reviewed with Changes</i>	<i>Reviewed without Changes</i>
01/05/2012	11/21/2016
06/30/2020	
05/13/2025	

V. Contact Information

Environmental Health and Safety, Life Safety and Environment of
Care Compliance Program
(409) 747-0515

