



OTIS COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN

Use of Portable Space Heaters in Classrooms and Office Spaces at Otis College of Art & Design

At Otis College of Art & Design, the safety of students, staff and the community at large is a priority. Thus, as an institution that is committed to providing a safe environment for students and staff this policy has been developed.

In California, the use of portable electric space heaters in classrooms is governed by the California Fire Code and local regulations. Per the 2022 California Fire Code, regulations concerning the use of portable electric space heaters as outlined in Section 603.9. This section permits the use of such heaters in all occupancies, provided they comply with specific safety requirements detailed in Sections 603.9.1 through 603.9.5. These provisions address aspects such as maintaining adequate clearance from combustible materials, ensuring proper electrical connections, and adhering to the manufacturer's installation and maintenance instructions.

Space Heater poses the following risks

- Shock hazard
- Hot surface/fire/burn hazard
- Trip/slip/fall hazard

Thus, Per the California Fire Code, portable electric space heaters are permitted at Otis College classroom setting and workspace under the following specific and strict conditions.

Direct Power Source (Supply): Portable electric space heaters must be plugged directly into an approved receptacle. Heaters should always be plugged directly into wall/floor outlets and not into extension cords or power strips, as this can pose a fire hazard.

Distance (Clearance) from Combustible Materials – Portable electric space heaters **must not** be operated within 3 feet (914mm) of any combustible materials (Appendix, pp 03).

Thermostat and Safety Features: All space heaters must be approved by facilities management. Additionally, the approved heaters must have a thermostat for heat regulation and be equipped with safety features like a tip-over shutdown mechanism.

Placement Near Exits: portable space heaters must be positioned at least 10 feet away from any required exit when only one exit is available.

Protection: Space heaters located in areas occupied by children must incorporate protective features or have guards to prevent accidental contact and tip over.

Ventilation: In accordance with Chapter 9 of the Los Angeles Mechanical Code and relevant provisions of Part 4, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulation (CCR), space heating appliances must be properly vented.

Certification: At Otis college only heaters that are listed by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL) or equivalent are allowed for use.

Appendix

Combustible materials are substances that can catch fire and burn when exposed to heat or flame. Below are common examples:

- Wood
- Cloth/ Fabric
- Paper
- Plastics
- Gasoline
- Kerosene
- Alcohol
- Coal
- Cooking oil
- Natural gas