



A MELG initiative working toward a leaner, meaner, and greener work environment



The cold season is truly upon us now and many office dwellers are tempted to toast their toes with a space heater.

While we want everyone to be comfortable at work (truly!), there are many reasons to use these devices sparingly and with caution. Here are some things to consider:

### SAFETY

- Space heaters were involved in an estimated **62,200 U.S. fires annually**, with associated losses of 670 deaths, 1,550 injuries, and \$909 million in direct property damage.
- Space heaters are the **second leading cause of structural fires** (following cooking equipment).
- During the peak months of space heater use, December, January, and February, these little devils account for **nearly half** (44%) of all structural fires.
- When the data focuses on only the northern states (removing warm states that don't use winter heating nearly as much), space heaters are responsible for nearly **70% of the carnage**.

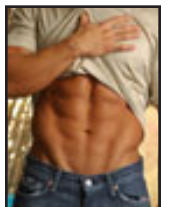
### EFFICIENCY

- An energy audit of the MELG building estimates that space heaters use about **9,600 kilowatt hours** of electricity during the winter season.
- That converts (at current rates) to about **\$1000 annually** to our electric bill.
- That's the equivalent of 3.44 acres of Michigan forest or **28 baby penguins**.



### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Dress for winter:** Now's that time when you can show off your collection of beautiful sweaters or bring your fuzzy socks to work.
- **Use space heater in moderation:** Turn it on to melt the frost from the window but try not to run it more than necessary.
- **Burn fat:** Lower temperatures are shown to raise the body's metabolic rate and some studies suggest that an adult can burn up to 10 additional calories per hour for every degree below 69 degrees Fahrenheit.



**MASB** has already taken the progressive step of banning space heaters in their office and will be reaping the benefits of working in a safer and more efficient environment. Kudos (and an extra blanket) to you! Maybe we'll all get there soon...