

# Space heaters: what you need to know

Portable electric space heaters can warm up that cold spot in your home, and maybe even reduce your heating bill if used properly. Or, they can create a significant cost if they're used as the primary heating system for a room. A 1,000-watt heater that runs continuously for 30 days would use over 700 kilowatt hours, for example, which would typically cost nearly \$80!

If your space heater is used to target heat to a small area of the house where you spend most of your time, while keeping the main thermostat at a lower setting, then you can actually save money on your total heating bill. Or, you might be able to leave your main furnace off on a mild evening, while staying cozy with a space heater in your living room. But space heaters aren't intended to replace your whole-house heating system, and for safety reasons shouldn't be run 24 hours a day.



ant energy or with a fan blowing warm air. Don't be fooled by marketing claims that one heater will use less energy than others. The wattage rating determines how much heat is created, typically 1,000 to 1,500 watts for plug-in heaters.

The right heater for you may depend on your situation, considering the cabinet size, child or pet safety concerns, or whether you need direct or indirect heating comfort.

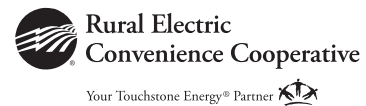
## Safety first

Space heaters can cause fires if used improperly. Read the manufacturer's operating instructions, and never leave space heaters unattended. Turn off your space heater and unplug it before leaving the room or going to bed.

Keep space heaters at least three feet from flammable items such as draperies, blankets and sofas. Never use extension cords or multiple plugs with a space heater, and make sure the unit is not plugged into the same circuit as other electric appliances.

## Electric is efficient

All electric space heaters use resistance heating, which is 100 percent efficient. They may distribute the heat as radi-



# 12 Days of Holiday Safety

It's easy to make safety a part of your holiday with these tips. Tackle one a day and you're well on your way to a safe New Year!



ESFi  
Electrical Safety Foundation International

**Day 1 What's that noise?** Test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Make sure everyone knows what to do if they hear them.

**Day 2 What a shocker!** Before use, inspect all electrical lights, decorations, and extension cords for damage.

**Day 3 Two's company, three's a crowd.** Do not overload outlets with too many decorations or devices.

**Day 4 Is it working?** Test your ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) to make sure they're protecting you.

**Day 5 Ouch!** Prevent trips and falls by keeping cords safely along walls and out of doorways and high traffic areas.

**Day 6 Kids eat the darndest things!** Avoid putting lights, metal hooks, breakable ornaments, and other small decorations within reach of young children.

**Day 7 Thirsty?** Keep your Christmas tree stand full of water. A fresh, green tree poses less of a fire hazard than a dry tree.

**Day 8 Make a wish!** Blow out the candles before leaving a room or going to bed.

**Day 9 Nice and warm.** Keep space heaters at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn—decorations, trees, gifts, and curtains.

**Day 10 Can't touch this!** Consider installing tamper-resistant outlets/receptacles to prevent kids from inserting objects into the slots.

**Day 11 Escape Route:** Share your family fire escape plan with overnight guests.

**Day 12 Hot stuff!** Keep children away from cooking areas; use back burners and turn pot handles in away from little hands.

There's no greater gift you can give your family than a safe and happy holiday! Learn more at [holidaysafety.org](http://holidaysafety.org).