

Portable Electrical Lighting, Extension Cords and Heating Unit Controls

Lines of Business: Property, General Liability, Workers' Compensation

Risk Control Strategy/Key Issues: To establish a procedure to monitor and restrict the use of portable electrical lighting, extension cords and heating units.

Suggested Program Elements:

1. **Management Statement:** Assign responsibility and accountability to one individual to drive the implementation of this program within your organization. This individual should coordinate the inspection and enforcement procedures for all applicable facilities. Additionally, similar guidelines should be established for employees who regularly inspect, maintain and occupy your buildings.

Include a general statement defining your entity's official position on the use of extension cords and portable electrical appliances within your facilities, noting that the procedure is designed to protect buildings and occupants from damage or injury of any kind as a result of the improper use of unapproved or faulty devices.

2. **Procedural suggestions:** The appropriate state and local codes/regulations should be used as the minimum acceptable standard. Contact local code enforcement agencies for verification of the codes. The procedure should include the following;
 - No personal heating units or other electrical appliances
 - Portable lighting, extension cords or temporary wiring use is not to exceed 24 hours
 - Lighting fixtures are to be protected from physical damage
 - Extension cords are to be protected from physical damage
 - Electrical components are to be U.L. listed
 - Receptacles are to be protected by a GFCI standard as required by law
3. **Self inspections:** Designate which personnel within your organization will have the authority to:
 - Remove extension cords
 - Remove personal heating units
 - Confiscate or "Red Tag" equipment
4. **Employee reporting:** Develop a Condition Report Form to assist in the documentation process and track observed conditions. Provide training to the appropriate employees. Employee training should include;
 - How to use the Condition Report Form
 - What their responsibilities are
 - What to report

- Where to send the reports
- 5. Management activities: In order to fully implement the program, management should perform and document the following activities;
 - Distribute the new program procedures to all employees
 - Document the distribution and employee receipt of the program procedures
 - Post the program procedures in prominent locations
 - Uniformly enforce the program

Program Activities Calendar:

- In order to properly maintain the program, inspection personnel should monitor the facilities:
 - ✓ Weekly
 - ✓ Monthly
 - ✓ Quarterly
 - ✓ Annually
- Future purchases of portable electrical lighting, extension cords, and heating units should also comply with the procedures of the program.

Web Links:

- National Fire Protection Association
<http://www.nfpa.org>
- United States Department of Labor – Occupational Safety & Health Administration
<http://www.osha.gov>
- International Code Council
<http://www.intlcode.org>

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