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## How To Save on Heating Costs with Portable Heaters

Electric portable heaters should be used sparingly. Attempting to heat your entire home with portable heaters or to use portable heaters as your only heat source is not cost-effective. Using a 1500 watt model for 12 hours daily will really add up. Some units feature high, medium, and low settings which allow you to choose a lower wattage.



However, using electric portable heaters to reduce whole-house heating is quite cost effective. If the electric portable heater is used in the room where you spend most of your time, the remainder of the house does not need to be kept at your usual temperatures.



- If you have central heating, lower the thermostat 5-10 degrees while using the portable heater.
- Avoid using the heater overnight while everyone is asleep. Consider purchasing a model that has a remote or timer to turn the unit on without having to get out of bed in a cold room.
- Close the doors to the room where the portable heater is being used to hold the heat in that room.



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# Portable Heaters

**Learn How  
to Use Them Safely  
and Effectively**



  
MLGW



Portable heaters are an effective way of supplementing a whole house heating unit and reducing your heating costs. You can set the thermostat of a central heating unit down to a minimum and use a portable heater to heat the occupied rooms. They are also handy if an emergency should occur or the furnace breaks down.

Keep in mind, the effectiveness of space heaters is diminished in an extremely large room, one with vaulted or high ceilings or one with an extreme number of windows.

Also, be aware that portable heaters are responsible for more than 4,000 fires in homes across the country each year. These fires account for approximately 40 percent of heating-related fire deaths.



### **Safety Tips to Remember When Using a Portable Heater:**

- Read and follow the manufacturer's warnings and directions.
- Position portable electric heaters away from furniture, curtains, bedding and other combustible items.
- Never leave heaters unattended. Since many electric space heaters become hot to touch, the units should be kept out of reach of children and pets.
- Do not use space heaters overnight while everyone is asleep.

- Place space heaters on the floor for maximum efficiency and stability.
- Run the electric cord behind the furniture or at the edge of the room to prevent tripping.
- For maximum safety, avoid using a portable electric heater in a bathroom. However, if you do use one in a bathroom, always think safety first. Never touch a portable heater if the floor or any part of your body is wet. If available, plug the unit into an outlet with a GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter).
- Plug the heater into a circuit that has no other appliance or device in operation. Also, never pull on the cord to unplug the unit; instead, grasp the plug to remove it from the outlet.
- Unvented combustion units (kerosene, propane) are not recommended for indoor use, as they introduce unwanted combustion products into the living space. These units also deplete the air in the space where they are located. Always use low sulfur grade (K-1) kerosene.
- If you use a gas room heater, it must be installed only by qualified individuals, and the venting system should be inspected annually before the heating season begins.
- The gas flame on a gas room heater should burn steady and blue. A yellow or wavering flame, gas smell or overheating are signs of inadequate air supply.

## **Types of Portable Heaters**

A radiant heater is the most efficient choice when you will be in a room for only a few

hours. The heating cost is lower because electricity is not needed for the unit to heat the entire room- only the person in the room and their immediate surroundings are heated.



Quartz and infrared heaters produce instant heat by directing heating to a designated spot rather than the surrounding air. The heating element is encased in a metal housing and has a reflector panel behind it to pass the heat toward the objects.

Convection heaters come in baseboard, ceramic and fan-forced air models. Warm air rises and is distributed throughout the room. Commonly, they are completely enclosed and therefore make it the safest type of electric portable heater to use around small children. However, compared to the radiant models the air flow temperature may be lower.



Ceramic heaters come in many different shapes and styles, but all perform practically the same.

Oil-filled radiator heaters operate silently. They take longer to heat a room than ceramic heaters, but provide more even heating throughout the room once they have warmed up.