



# PORTABLE HEATER SAFETY

Toolbox Talks for the members of Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities

Winter 2015

**According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 25,000 residential fires, 300 deaths, and 6,000 burn injuries every year are associated with the use of portable space heaters.**

**When purchasing a portable heater, always choose one that has been tested and labeled by a nationally recognized testing laboratory, such as Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) or Canadian Standards Association (CSA). These heaters have been proven to meet safety standards and the manufacturers are required to provide consumers with important information about the safe usage and care of the product.**

**Make sure the heater has tip-over and overheat protection. Heaters with this type of protection will automatically shut off if the sensors are activated.**

**Always keep the heater at least 3 feet away from materials that will burn. One quarter of all fires caused by portable heaters happened when clothing, bedding, newspapers or rugs were too close.**

**Always try to plug the heater directly into a wall receptacle but if you must use an extension cord, make sure that it is a heavy duty cord and is equipped with a ground pin. Do not use the heater if the cord has fraying, damaged insulation, evidence of overheating or if the ground pin is missing.**



- Portable heaters are for temporary use only. Never leave your heater unattended and always unplug it when not in use.
- Keep the heater away from water and out of damp locations, unless designed for those areas. Never plug or unplug a heater with wet hands!

**Inspect and clean your heater on a regular basis. Never use a defective heater.**