

COLUMBUS CURRENTS

Are Portable Space Heaters Efficient for My Home?

By Abby Berry

Small space heaters are meant to do exactly as their name says: heat a small space. But unfortunately, many people use portable space heaters to heat their entire home, which can really take a toll on your energy bills. The truth is, whether you should use space heaters really depends on your home's efficiency and energy needs.

If you're using a space heater to compensate for problems in your home, like inadequate insulation, drafty windows and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall efficiency of your home. If you're on a tight budget, caulking and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors is a low-cost, easy way to save energy. Depending on the size of your home, adding insulation can be a great next step. Loose fill insulation typically costs \$1 to \$1.50 per square foot.

Taking these proactive energy-saving measures rather than relying on space heaters for supplemental warmth can reduce your heating and cooling bills for years to come.

Perhaps your home is energy efficient but you're cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater may work for your needs.

A good comparison is ceiling fans; we use ceiling fans in the summer to cool people, not rooms.

A space heater can be used in a similar way during winter months. Only use a space heater in small spaces that you're occupying and, if possible, try to shut off other rooms to contain the warmth provided by the space heater. If you decide to use a space heater to heat a small area in your home, make sure the heater is properly sized for the space; most heaters include a general sizing table.

A word about safety: the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates more than 25,000 residential fires are associated with the use of space heaters every year, resulting in more than 300 deaths. If you must use a space heater, purchase a newer model that includes the most current safety features and make sure it carries the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label. Choose a thermostatically controlled heater to avoid energy waste and overheating, and place the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic when in use. Always keep children and pets away from space heaters.

Consider alternative ways to stay warm like extra layers of clothing or UL-approved electric blankets. If you have hardwood or tile floors, lay down area rugs to provide additional insulation (and appeal!) and maintain warmth.

We know it's cold out there, but remember in addition to safety concerns, space heaters can greatly increase your energy bills if used improperly.

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Looking for a New Year's Resolution?



Make the commitment to give back to your community this year by signing up for Operation Round Up with Columbus Electric Cooperative. Operation Round Up rounds up your monthly bill to the next highest dollar amount making a donation to our scholarship fund. All donations are tax deductible. Sign up today at columbusco-op.org/operation-round, call us at 1-800-950-2667 or stop by our office

Education is the foundation for a better tomorrow!



Need Money for College?



Columbus Electric Cooperative offers education scholarships to active members of CEC and their immediate family members. Scholarship recipients can receive financial assistance for up to eight semesters of undergraduate studies at the college of their choice. Applicants must complete an application and submit letters of recommendation. Applications may be obtained by contacting our office, your high school counselor or at columbusco-op.org/scholarships. Deadline to submit a scholarship application is March 2

LIHEAP PROTECTION NOTICE

LIHEAP Protection from winter shut-off ends March 15, 2022. To avoid potential disconnection of services please, contact the human services department at 800-283-4465, or the appropriate tribal or pueblo entity for eligibility information for low-income heating energy assistance program (LIHEAP). Your service will not be disconnected from November 15, 2021 through March 15, 2022, if you meet the qualifications of LIHEAP and have no past due amounts or you remain current on any settlement or installment agreement for amounts due as of November 15, 2021. Members of New Mexico tribes or pueblos who need help with translation or with other matters may contact the commission's consumer relations division at 1-888-427-5772, who will contact the appropriate tribal or pueblo official for assistance.

Para informacion en español llame 1-800-950-2667.

If you need payment arrangements or assistance, please call or stop by our office to speak to a Member Service Representative at 575-546-8838, Monday thru Friday from 8:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M. We will work with members on a case-by-case basis to find a payment solution.

Board Highlights

The Columbus Electric Board of Trustees, at the December regular meeting, voted to continue to participate in the offerings of Tri-State G&T's Beneficial Electrification and Energy Efficiency Program for 2022. This allows the Cooperative to pass on to the members the various rebates offered through the program. There were some changes in the program which expanded some offerings and removed others. See our website for changes and current rebates.

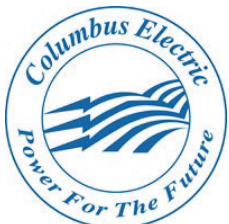


Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Maximize your heating system's performance by inspecting, cleaning or replacing air filters once a month or as needed to reduce energy costs and prevent potential damage to your system.

Make sure radiators, baseboard heaters and warm-air registers aren't blocked so air can flow freely.

Source: Dept. of Energy



Emergency Response Number
1-800-228-0579

Toll - free Office Number
1-800-950-COOP (2667)

www.columbusco-op.org