



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
PO Box 45600, Olympia, Washington 98504-5600

March 14, 2025

AL TSA: ALF #2025-007
PORTABLE ELECTRIC SPACE HEATERS

Dear Assisted Living Facility Administrator:

In the past if an Assisted Living Facility (ALF) wanted to have portable electric space heaters, the facility was required to obtain written approval from the State Fire Marshal to meet the requirements of WAC 388-78A-2990(4).

The State Fire Marshal has determined they will not issue written approval for portable electric space heaters. The State Fire Marshal Report will now include a section where approval for portable electric space heaters will be documented during the annual inspection.

The State Fire Marshal has also provided guidance from the [2021 International Fire Code](#) on acceptable portable electric space heaters in ALFs:

- Only portable space heaters that are listed and labeled shall be used in a facility.
 - Listed and labeled means the heater need to be approved by a recognized testing agency such as UL (Underwrites Laboratories), ETL (Intertek), CSA (Canadian Standards Association), FM (Factory Mutual). These labels indicate the portable electric heaters have been tested and meet safety standards.
- Portable electric space heaters must be plugged into an approved receptacle.
- Portable electric space heaters must not be plugged into an extension cord.
- Portable electric space heaters must not be operated with 3 feet of combustible materials and only operated in locations for where they are listed.

Thank you for your continued commitment to resident health and safety.

If you have any questions, please contact Tamara Tredo, Policy Program Manager, RCSPolicy@dshs.wa.gov

Sincerely,

Amy Abbott, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: *"Partnering with People"*