

January 11, 2010

DIRECTIVE:	JOB CORPS INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 09-53
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TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS
ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS

FROM: LYNN A. INTREPIDI
Interim National Director
Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: Space Heater Safety

1. Purpose. To provide the Job Corps community with information about the safe use of space heaters on center.
2. Background. Due to cold weather throughout the United States and an article in the October 2009 *Job Corps Safety Circle Newsletter*, the National Office of Job Corps has received inquiries from the Job Corps community requesting guidance on the safe use of space heaters on center. Although not prohibited by the Job Corps Policy and Requirements Handbook (PRH), space heaters pose significant fire and injury risk; centers are strongly cautioned on using space heaters. According to the National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA), electric and kerosene heaters are the leading cause of house fires during the months of December, January, and February. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reports that 25,000 house fires occur each year due to space heaters. Homeowner negligence is the cause of the majority of accidents.
3. Action. Job Corps centers are encouraged to follow the space heater safety recommendations listed in the October 2009 edition of the *Job Corps Safety Circle Newsletter*. Centers that are currently using unvented kerosene or natural gas space heaters should remove the units from service immediately and replace them with electric space heaters.

When using supplemental heating systems, the National Office of Job Corps recommends that centers:

- a. only use equipment with an Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. tag or label;
- b. use equipment with a thermostat control to conserve energy and prevent overheating;

- c. purchase heaters that are rated for a certain size room;
 - d. purchase new heaters only (avoid second-hand units);
 - e. purchase portable space heaters equipped with a tip-switch that will automatically shut off the unit if it is tipped over;
 - f. remove unvented kerosene and natural gas units from service; most states prohibit their use indoors;
 - g. permanently locate vented units next to an outside wall, to allow for installation of a flue gas vent through a ceiling or directly through the wall to the outside;
 - h. purchase vented sealed combustion or 100% outdoor air heaters because they are much safer to operate and are more efficient;
 - i. have vented space heaters professionally inspected annually;
 - j. use electric space heaters to heat a small area or dormitory room (they are not effective for heating large rooms or areas);
 - k. locate the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic; and
 - l. plug electric space heaters into an outlet or use a heavy-duty extension cord or 14-gauge wire or higher if an extension cord is necessary.
4. Expiration Date. Until superseded.
5. Inquiries. Direct all inquiries to Marsha Fitzhugh at (202) 693-3099 or fitzhugh.marsha@dol.gov, Kelley Clark at (202) 693-3089 or clark.kelley@dol.gov, or Heather Edmonds at (202) 693-3774 or edmonds.heather@dol.gov.