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	Origin of Request: Regional Resource Staff	
	Distribution: Licensing Staff, Administrative Staff, Office of Child and Family Policy (A,L,P)	
	Key Words: 89 IAC 402, Licensing Standards for Foster Family Homes, Portable Heaters, Space Heaters, Portable Space Heaters, Safety, Fire Code.	
	Approved by:	

Interpretation

Question: Are portable space heaters prohibited **only** in rooms where foster children sleep or are they prohibited in all rooms where any children sleep?

Applicable To: Licensed Foster Homes, Day Care Homes and Group Day Care Homes.

Policy Citation: Section 402.8(d)- Portable space heaters may be used as a supplementary source of heat if they meet safety approval standards (Underwriters Laboratories) and are used in accordance with local and State building and fire codes. Portable space heaters may not be used in rooms where children are sleeping. Portable and fixed space heaters in areas occupied by children shall be separated by fire resistant partitions or barriers to prevent contact with the heater.

(Source: Amended at 24 Ill. Reg., effective November 1, 2000)

Discussion: **Portable kerosene and other open-flame heaters** discharge fumes into the living area. There is the potential for carbon monoxide poisoning from incomplete combustion of fuels if no proper outside ventilation exists. Many become hot enough to start fires in adjacent objects. Some are easily tipped over (National Health and Safety Performance Standards, page 147).

Hot portable electrical heaters can cause fire when they come into contact with curtains or other combustible articles and burns on accidental contact or when children attempt to pick up the heater. Electrical heaters can come in contact with water, causing shock.

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The risk of harm to sleeping children by fumes and fire in case of open-flame portable heaters and burns, electrical shock and fire in case of electrical heaters is great.

There is also an increasing of risk of harm to children where portable space heaters are present due to children's curiosity and activity level and the possibility of contact with a portable space heater by the children. This is applicable to all children.

Response:

Portable space heaters are not allowed in rooms where any children sleep including non-foster children. However, in areas that children occupy during their activities, portable or fixed heaters shall have a partition or barrier that is fire resistant and prevents children coming into contact with the heater.