

- Never put heater fuel in a container that has been used for gasoline or *any* other liquid.
- Never lend your container to anyone who may use it for anything other than 1-k kerosene.
- Instruct anyone buying fuel for you that only 1-k kerosene is to be put in the container.
- Watch your container being filled, the pump should be marked kerosene. If there is any doubt, ask the attendant.

Once you have the correct fuel it must be stored safely. Store your fuel in a cool, dry place, out of the reach of children. Do not store it inside or near a heat source.

### Care of the Wick is Critical

Some insurance companies have reported an increase in claims for smoke damaged furniture, clothing, and other household goods caused by improper care of kerosene heater wicks. Portable kerosene heaters have either a wick made of fiber glass or cotton. The most important things to remember about the wick are:

- Fiber glass and cotton wicks are *not* interchangeable. Replace your wick only with the exact type recommended by the manufacturer.
- Fiber glass wicks are maintained by a process known as "clean burning." To "clean burn," take the heater to a well ventilated place outside of the living area, turn the heater on and allow it to run completely out of fuel. After the heater cools, brush any remaining carbon deposits from the wick. Following "clean burning," the fiber glass wick should feel soft.
- A cotton wick is maintained in top operating condition by careful even trimming. Remove uneven or brittle ends carefully with a pair of scissors.

NEVER TRIM A FIBER GLASS WICK AND NEVER "CLEAN BURN" A COTTON WICK. For more information on wick maintenance, consult your owners manual or your dealer.

### If You Have a Fire

- Sound the alarm. Get everyone out of the house. Call the fire department from a neighbor's house. Never try to go back into a burning home for any reason.
- Fighting the fire yourself is dangerous. Fire deaths involving kerosene heaters have occurred because someone tried to fight the fire or tried to move a burning heater outside.
- The safest way to fight a fire is to call the fire department without delay.
- Did you know that smoke detectors and a home fire escape plan *more than double* your family's chances of escaping a nighttime fire alive?
- Smoke detectors properly installed and tested at least monthly and a practiced home fire escape plan are a small price to pay for a second chance to escape a nighttime fire.

Information for this brochure was contributed by the Ohio Department of Commerce, Division of State Fire Marshal, Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Insurance Institute, and National Kerosene Heater Association.

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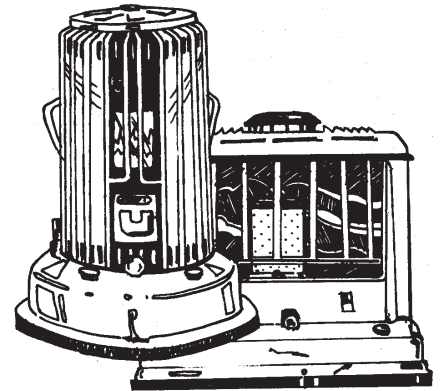
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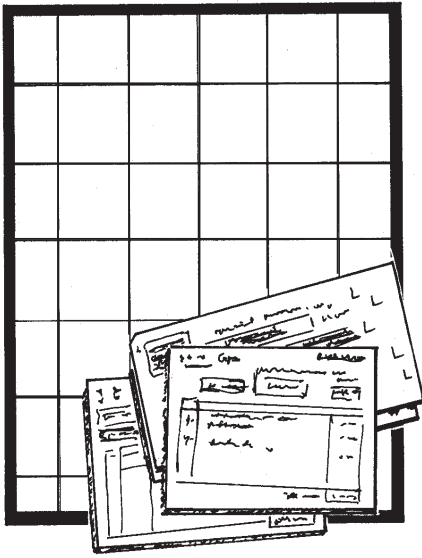
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# Safe Use & Selection of



# KEROSENE HEATERS



**Heating Bills** have continued to be a source of frustration and sometimes, hardship for many Ohioans. In an effort to resolve that problem, more consumers are turning to alternative heating methods such as wood burning stoves, electric space heaters, and kerosene heaters. The latter has especially been the popular choice of urban dwellers. Kerosene heaters have been around for many years and the latest models are more economical, portable, and safer to use than ever before. Despite these improvements, fires in Ohio caused by kerosene heaters continue. Most of these blazes were the result of improper use of the heater by the consumer. This guide attempts to instruct kerosene heater owners on the proper way to operate the device, what type of fuel should be used, and what features to look for when shopping for a kerosene heater.

## When Selecting A Kerosene Heater, Consider:

- ✓ **Heat Output.** No heater will heat the whole house. One or two rooms is a good rule of thumb. Read the heater's labeling carefully for BTU produced.
- ✓ **Safety Listing.** Has the heater been tested by one of the major safety laboratories such as UL for construction and safety features?
- ✓ **New/Used Heaters.** Second hand, used, or repaired heaters may be bad investments and a fire hazard. When buying a used or reconditioned heater, that purchase should be accompanied by the owner's manual or operating instructions. Other points to consider would be: checking the condition of the tip-over switch, fuel gage, ignition system, fuel tank, and the condition of the grill surrounding the heating element. Also look for the label from a major safety laboratory (UL).
- ✓ **Safety features.** Does the heater have its own igniter or do you use matches? The heater must be equipped with an automatic shutoff. Ask the dealer to demonstrate its function should the heater be knocked over.

## Proper Use of a Kerosene Heater

Follow the manufacturer's directions, in particular those describing ventilation of the heater. To ensure adequate ventilations, have a window ajar or leave a door open to an adjoining room to provide an exchange of air. Heaters should never be left burning overnight or while sleeping.

There is a potential for adverse health effects caused by pollutants produced by unvented space heaters. If dizziness, drowsiness, chest pain, fainting, or respiratory irritation occurs, shut off the heater at once and move the affected person to fresh air. Install a carbon monoxide detector in your house.

Place a heater **no closer than three feet** to combustible materials such as drapes, furniture, or wall coverings. Keep doorways and halls clear. In case of fire, a heater should not be blocking your escape.

Keep children away from the heater while it is operating to prevent contact burns. Some heater surfaces can reach temperatures of several hundred degrees Fahrenheit under normal operating conditions.

## Refueling the Heater

Careless refueling is another cause of kerosene heater fires. Owners pour kerosene into hot, sometimes still burning heaters, and a fire starts. To prevent a refueling fire and needless injury:

- Refuel the heater outdoors, only after it has cooled.
- Refuel the heater to only 90% full.

Once indoors where it is warm, the kerosene will expand. Checking the fuel gage during refilling will help keep you from overfilling the heater's fuel storage tank.



## Buying the Correct Fuel and Storing it Safely



Your heater is designed to burn high quality crystal clear 1-k kerosene. The use of any other fuel, including gasoline and camping fuel, can lead to a serious fire. The proper fuel, crystal clear 1-k kerosene, *will* be crystal clear. Do not use discolored fuel. Kerosene has a distinct odor that is different from the odor of gasoline. If your fuel smells like gasoline, do not use it.

The leading cause of kerosene heater fires in Ohio is a result of accidentally contaminating the kerosene fuel with gasoline. To avoid the serious consequences of fuel contamination, follow these recommendations:

- Keep 1-k kerosene only in a container clearly marked KEROSENE. The container should be a distinctive blue or white color to distinguish it from the familiar red gasoline can.