

Space Heater Guide

Did you know heating your home with electric space heaters can easily double or triple your electric bill if you are not careful? Even though they are typically small in size, and often touted as 100% efficient, electric space heaters can use a lot of electricity. Most space heaters use on average 1,000 to 1,500 watts of electricity and cost about 13¢ an hour to operate. While that may not sound like much, it can add up quickly if heaters are left on for several hours a day. Leaving one space heater on for 8 hours a day for a period of one month could easily add an additional \$30-\$35 to your monthly electric bill.

Following are some good tips to help manage your electric bill if you use electric space heaters in your home.

- Do not heat rooms that are not in use. Space heaters should only be used in rooms you are occupying and should never be left unattended. Remember to turn off heaters when you leave a room to help you save money on your electric bill.
- Appropriate uses for space heaters. Most space heaters work best in areas that can easily be closed off to retain heat, such as a small bedroom or office. They do not work well in areas that cannot be closed off to the rest of the home, or large rooms as the heat will dissipate away quickly.
- Select the right space heater. Not all space heaters are created equal. Some space heaters are designed to evenly heat a whole room, while others are better at heating only what is directly in front of them. Use the following guide to identify which space heater might be right for you.
- Never use extension cord.
- Your central heating system may be a better choice. If you are using multiple space heaters in your home for more than a few hours a day, it may be more efficient to use your central furnace for heating. Using your central heating is generally the most cost-effective way to heat an entire home.

BASEBOARD HEATER



Electric Usage - (Average 6 foot heater uses 1.5 kWh or 13¢ for each hour of use)

Cost to Purchase - Usually hard wired but plug-in versions are available and range in price from \$60 - \$250.

Description - Cold air is drawn through the bottom of the unit. The air is heated by electric coils and then vented through the top of the unit.

Pros

- Heats only one room as opposed to a central furnace, which heats the whole house.

Cons

- Not very effective, as heat is not typically well circulated in the room.
- Most units are permanently mounted to the wall so they are not mobile.

RADIANT HEATERS – PARABOLIC ELECTRIC HEATER



Electric Usage - Average 1,000 Watts (an average heater uses 1.0 kWh or .09¢ for each hour of use)

Cost to Purchase - \$30 - \$75

Description - Electricity is used to heat a heating element. The heat from that element is then reflected toward a specific area.

Pros

- Good for heating specific area (sitting in a chair). Does not heat the whole room.

Cons

- Directional and does not push the heat via a fan.
- Very hot and can pose fire safety risk.

CERAMIC HEATER



Electric Usage - Average 1,000 Watts (an average heater uses 1.0 kWh or .09¢ for each hour of use)

Cost to Purchase - \$30 - \$70

Description - Ceramic plates heat up when electricity is passed through them. Aluminum baffles absorb the heat which is then dispersed by a fan.

Pros

- Many come with built-in safety features, such as a timer, overheat sensor, and a thermostat.
- Many have an oscillating function which allows the heat to be dispersed across a room.

Cons

- Once heater is turned off, there is minimal residual heat to continue heating the room.
- The fan produces some noise, unlike most of the other space heater options.

CONVECTION HEATER – OIL FILLED



Electric Usage - Average 1,500 Watts (an average heater uses 1.5 kWh or 13¢ for each hour of use)

Cost to Purchase - \$35-\$50

Description - An oil-filled heater contains oil that is stored inside a sealed compartment. The oil is heated and circulates through the heater. The heat comes from both sides of the heater and uses convection to heat a room.

Pros

- More effective at evenly heating an entire room.
- Once the heater is turned off, residual heat from the oil continues to heat the space for some period of time.

Cons

- Does not provide immediate heat.

Questions? Email climate@ashland.or.us