

CHEMICAL SAFETY MOMENT

Issue 26 – November 2017

Heat Gun → Fire and Injury



Incident recap: While performing a Dean-Stark distillation, a researcher used a heat gun to heat the apparatus to increase the rate of reflux. Unknowingly, the glassware joints were not properly seated, and, as a result, toluene vapors started to escape from the apparatus. When the vapors came in contact with the heating coil of the heat gun they ignited and caused the solvent to flash, splashing and burning the researcher.

The researcher was wearing a flame-resistant lab coat which may have reduced injury. However, they did sustain minor burns to some exposed areas of skin, which were treated by medical professionals.

This incident is a good learning experience for all researchers. (1) Never use a heat gun when flammable vapors are present, (2) Always wear the proper PPE (FR lab coat in this case), and (3) Report ALL injuries, no matter the severity.

Space Heaters are FORBIDDEN!



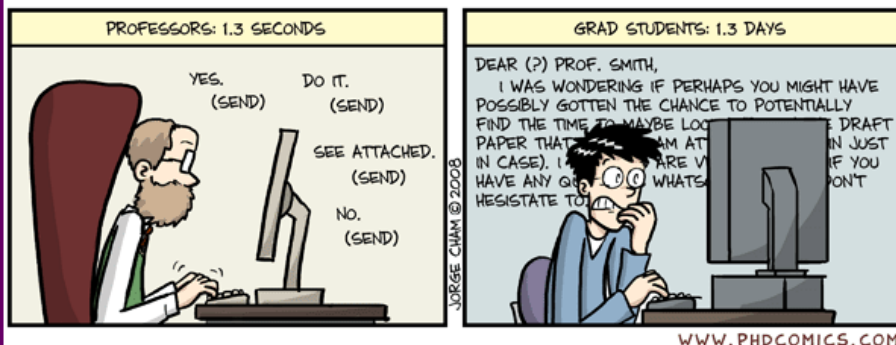
Portable space heaters are a potential source of fire if not used properly. EHS has determined that due to the increased fire risk, space heaters are **not permitted in University buildings**. If you feel that a University space cannot be adequately heated via the installed building heating (HVAC) system, please contact UD Fixit at 831-1141 to report the condition.

If Facilities deems the HVAC system inefficient in delivering the proper temperature to the space for a prolonged period, then Facilities HVAC may consider providing temporary heat that meets the approval of EHS and all applicable codes.

University Holidays

During the holiday season, the response time for emergency personnel could be delayed. Stay safe by not running any high-hazardous operations during this time. If you are in the lab, be sure to use the BUDDY SYSTEM and never work alone!

AVERAGE TIME SPENT COMPOSING ONE E-MAIL



November 23-24

