

# What's the Risk?

## Heat Lamps



### THE ISSUE

Heat lamps provide a simple (but sometimes dangerous) method to warm an area. Radiant heat is generated by a large wattage bulb inside a metal or plastic housing. They come in a variety of styles specific to their intended use. Whether metal, plastic, or some other construction style, the hazard is not from the way the unit is made, but rather from the very hot bulb.



### WHAT'S THE RISK?

When used correctly, and monitored routinely, a heat lamp is a relatively safe method to provide short term heat to an area. When used incorrectly, the potential for a fire loss is significant. The heat generated by the bulb can be intense and if it contacts flammable material it may ignite. Remember, the risk of fire increases whenever a heat lamp is used.

#### Claim Examples

- A heat lamp was used in a barn to keep a water pumphouse room warm. The nylon rope suspending the heat lamp stretched due to the heat and the lamp eventually ignited straw on the floor causing a loss of nearly \$500,000.
- A heat lamp was used to warm a lizard terrarium in a child's bedroom. The lamp was not securely attached and fell over igniting nearby combustible material causing a loss of nearly \$170,000.



### WHAT CAN BE DONE?

The following guidelines apply whenever or wherever a heat lamp is used:

- They should only be used for short-term heating; they are not a long-term heating solution
- They must be securely fastened with a metal chain to prevent falling
- The power cord should be short enough to disconnect the electrical supply if it were to fall
- The bulb used must never exceed the maximum wattage rating set by the manufacturer
- They should have a proper safety guard attached. If the lamp falls, the guard will force it to land on its side with the bulb pointing up, reducing the risk of fire



*This thermal image shows a maximum temperature of at least 84°C (183°F). The temperature in front of the bulb can be significantly higher than at the base.*

