



**University of the Incarnate Word**  
**Flammable Decorations and Heat Emitting Devices Policy**

**Effective Date: 09/13/2017**

**Contact: Sam McDaniel, Director of Environmental Health  
Safety and Risk Management (EHSRM)**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to the University of the Incarnate Word (UIW) community for the protection of UIW property. Flammable decorations hung in excess on walls and heat or flame-emitting devices are fire hazards to UIW property. This policy will offer guidance on the use of such, in order to comply with NFPA 101, Life Safety Code, Interior Finish, Contents, and Furnishings, Chapter 10, Sections 10.2.4.6 and 10.3, etc as applicable.

**SCOPE**

This policy applies to all university-controlled properties, including all athletic facilities.

**DEFINITIONS**

- A. University-controlled property - Property that is owned, leased, operated, and/or maintained by UIW.
- B. Decorations- materials hung or placed on walls or surfaces in observance of holidays or notable occasions.
- C. Candle- Heat and light emitting object utilizing an open flame
- D. Wax melter- Sometimes branded as Scentsy, utilizing a bulb to melt scented wax to produce fragrances
- E. Heater- Heat producing device utilizing electric coils used to heat a personal workspace or area
- F. Appliance- personal use devices such as coffee pots, toasters, toaster ovens, hair straighteners etc.

**HEALTH & SAFETY CONCERNS**

Decorations- Conservatively decorating department offices and workspaces in celebration of special occasions such as birthdays, office parties, holidays (Christmas, Valentine Day, Easter), baby showers or birth announcement, is acceptable when the following NFPA 101, Life Safety Code, Interior Finish, Contents, and Furnishings, Chapter 10, Sections 10.2.4.6 and 10.3 requirements are met:

- (1) Decorations shall be made of fire resistant material.
- (2) Doors and exit passageways shall remain unobstructed, obvious, and easily recognizable.
- (3) Exit Signs and visual fire alarm devices (strobe lights) shall remain unobstructed and clearly visible.
- (4) Fire Alarm audible notification devices shall remain uncovered and at sound levels as initially installed.
- (5) The EHSRM office shall approve decorating more than a single office or room, to include, intra-departmental competitions.
- (6) Furnishing or decorations of an explosive or highly flammable quality shall not be used.
- (7) NFPA 101, Life Safety Code, Edition 2000, Chapter 7, Section 7.1.10.2.1, "No furnishings, decorations, or other objects shall obstruct exits, access thereto, egress therefrom, or visibility thereof".

Candles, Warmers and Fragrance Emitting Devices

- (1) Candles (votive, decorative, or ceremonial) are a significant fire hazard and shall not be used in any UIW building or holding.
  - a. Candles for ceremonial use are permitted with approval from the EHSRM office.

- (2) Wax warmers (Scentsy, etc.) or any fragrance producing appliances shall not be used in any UIW building or holding.

#### Heaters

Personal, portable, space heaters are a fire hazard and shall not be used in UIW buildings, unless approved by UIW Facilities department and EHSRM for emergency purposes.

#### Appliance Safety

Personal or departmental electrical appliances (coffee pots, toasters, toaster ovens, etc.) used in UIW buildings must be:

- (1) Underwriters Laboratories (UL) approved, listed, and appropriately labeled.
- (2) Manufactured with an automatic shut off switch that turns the unit off when the unit is left unattended for a predetermined period of time.
- (3) Used only in the mode and manner for which it is manufactured.
- (4) Attached only to approved, permanently mounted, electrical, wall outlets of appropriate voltage and current.

#### **FAILURE TO COMPLY**

Failure to comply with this policy may result in confiscation or disposal of unsafe devices as determined by EHSRM officials. In extreme instances, disciplinary action through Human Resources or Residence Life may be applicable.

#### **REPORTING**

To report a violation of this policy or for general questions, please contact the EHSRM Office at 210-829-6035. To report an area of concern regarding workspace temperature regulation contact the Office of Facilities Management at 210-829-6023 or the EHSRM Office at 210-829-6035. To report an injury or property damage, contact Campus Police at 210-829-6030.