

Temporary Heaters: Check the Setup Before Use

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Why this matters

A heater approved for one setup may be unsafe after an enclosure, fuel supply or storage area changes. Check the actual installation before lighting or energizing it.

Objective: Verify heater suitability and the protective arrangements for today's location.

Key hazards or failure points

Wrong heater or fuel; nearby combustibles; moving tarps; unstable support; damaged supply; poor ventilation; defeated safety devices; blocked escape.

Practical controls

- Use a suitable heater with its actual instructions. The responsible person establishes applicable clearances, support, ventilation and fuel or electrical requirements before installation.
- Keep required separation from combustibles and protect the heater from impact or tipping. Secure enclosure materials so movement cannot defeat the required clearance.
- Authorized personnel inspect the supply and applicable safety devices using prescribed methods. Follow model instructions for shutdown, cooling and refueling. Remove defective equipment from use.

Verify It in the Field

Match the heater model, fuel and intended location to its instructions and applicable rules. Record the clearance criteria and actual measurements; do not assume one distance fits all heaters.

Check stable mounting, required floor protection and the actual ventilation arrangement. Confirm openings remain as planned when doors close or tarps move. Follow the required exposure assessment and monitoring plan.

Inspect accessible hoses, cords and connections safely. Have assigned personnel complete prescribed device checks. Verify shutdown access and escape routes. Never create a leak or defeat a safeguard to test protection.

Stop and reassess

Hold use for uncertain suitability, inadequate clearance or ventilation, damaged supply, leakage or failed safeguards. Reassess moved heaters and changed enclosures. For suspected poisoning or an alarm, leave to fresh air and summon emergency help; do not delay escape to shut equipment down.

Ask the crew

1. Which instructions and clearance criteria cover this heater?
2. What changes when the enclosure closes?
3. Who checks the supply and required safety devices?

Construction heater readiness; not installation certification or repair training.

Sources: OSHA 1926.154 and applicable 1926.153; actual heater instructions.

Free next step: [JHA/JSA planning & field-verification worksheet](#)

Expanded guidance and separate forms: toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/temporary-heater-setup-check