SPACE HEATING

Space heating refers to equipment that provides heat to a small space, usually a room. This equipment is usually portable but may include fixed installations, such as fireplaces.

- **Unvented combustion space heaters** that use fuels such as kerosene, heating oil, propane, charcoal, white gas, or anything else that burns are **extremely dangerous and illegal to use in a confined space**! The risks include carbon monoxide poisoning, as well as potential fire hazards. Many of these devices were sold years ago, before there was a complete understanding of the dangers—and before we began to tighten our homes with insulation, air-sealing, and new windows and doors. Even unvented units used in attached garages are unsafe, due to the potential of gasses leaking into the home.

- **Vented combustion space heaters** include units such as gas or wood fireplaces and gas/oil/wood stoves. Because they are vented to the outside, these devices are not portable and require a fixed location in a room. Some units are designed to be vented out through a special panel inserted into an open window. As with all combustion devices, proper installation, venting, fuel supply, and spacing from walls and furniture are essential for safe operation. In insulated and sealed homes, these devices will likely require a fresh air supply to operate properly and safely.

- **Electric space heaters** are the most common type of space heating. Consisting of a floor unit plugged into a wall outlet, these can be of several types, including radiant heaters, oil-filled heaters, and heaters with circulation fans to distribute the air throughout the room. Newer models have automatic shut-off switches in the event they are tipped over.