



THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Window Mounted Air Conditioners

General

The University of Maine (“UMaine”) has produced this policy to provide a safe, aesthetic and durable installation that does not create additional facility problems both now and in the future. Consideration will be given to the size of the unit, the area to be cooled, how it will be mounted and how power will be provided. Window installations in single-level buildings can be a means of unauthorized access such as in the case of burglary or vandalism and installations in multi-level buildings can lead to safety concerns such as units falling out of the windows and striking passers by. As such, only Facilities Management (FM) Personnel can install window-mounted air conditioning units and they will be performed in accordance with standards established by FM.

Regulatory Guidance

OSHA General Duty Clause 5(a)(1)

Requirements

FM will determine when it’s necessary that a window air conditioning unit is appropriate for the purpose requested. The request for the unit must be approved by the appropriate department head or director. The following items will be considered by Facilities Management:

- The window units will be sized by FM to insure that a unit of proper capacity is installed.
- The unit must be energy efficient with an Energy Efficient Ratio (EER) of 10 or greater.
- The cord must be a three-pronged heavy duty plug that is free from defects such as fraying, splaying or splicing marks.
- The requesting department or business unit will be charged for the installation of the unit as well as all subsequent maintenance, operating and replacement costs.
- FM will maintain, repair and replace the units as part of their ongoing maintenance.
- The window units should not interfere with the use of the building, interfere with the building’s envelope, not overload existing circuits or not cause power transients.
- The units should be structurally code compliant for business use and not be an architectural eyesore.
- FM will use durable materials that present a uniform appearance from the exterior of the building.
- The units will be mounted to provide the best operating efficiency.
- FM may determine that new or additional electrical service may be required prior to installation of the window or wall-mounted air conditioning unit. Existing circuits will be used whenever possible if load

and sensitivity makes it possible.

FM will assure that a proper installation is made. This will insure that:

- Windows seat properly and prohibit the infiltration of air in the cooling and heating seasons. Poor window seating causes drafts that result in service calls to FM and increase heating and cooling costs. Most existing installations prevent the full use of the window as designed such as keeping them from being used for natural ventilation when weather permits.
- Installations should not appear temporary in their construction or appearance. Unfinished plywood or Plexiglas should not be used as space fillers around units. Untreated plywood panels discolor and delaminate when weathered. Plexiglas becomes unsightly and brittle as time passes. Generally, maintenance-free colored aluminum clad panels will be utilized for air conditioning installations.
- Caulking will be completed to prevent outside air infiltration and drafts.
- The condensate line will not be blocked or pinched and will allow the discharge of condensate water to be released from the unit. Improper condensate discharge can lead to deterioration of the window, windowsill or the brick, wood, or cement block below. When the condensate is not permitted to properly drain from the area it does not take long to break down wood, mortar or cement.
- Support frames will be painted and/or primed to prevent rust and subsequent staining on the building.
- FM will assure that the installations are structurally sound, meet commercial standards and comply with building codes. What is typically accepted in a home is usually not appropriate to meet standards required in a public state facility.
- FM will determine if adequate electrical service is available. Numerous older buildings on campus have limited electrical service by present day's expectations and standards. This limited electrical service may cause chronic breaker trips and power transients that effect sensitive research equipment and computers within the facility if overloaded by an air conditioner.
- FM will determine that the optimal installation is utilized.

Responsibilities

Safety and Environmental Management

- Facilitate department requests.

Department Chairs or Directors

- Provide the air conditioning approval where necessary.

Facilities Management

- Determine the appropriate air conditioning window unit
- Size the air conditioning unit

- Confirm energy efficiency ratio (EER) of 10 or greater
- Install, maintain and repair AC units

Supervisors

- Obtain approval from the department head

Individual

- Obtain approval from the department head and immediate supervisor

**For Additional
Information**

Contact Facilities Management Work Control at 581-4400.

Document History

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