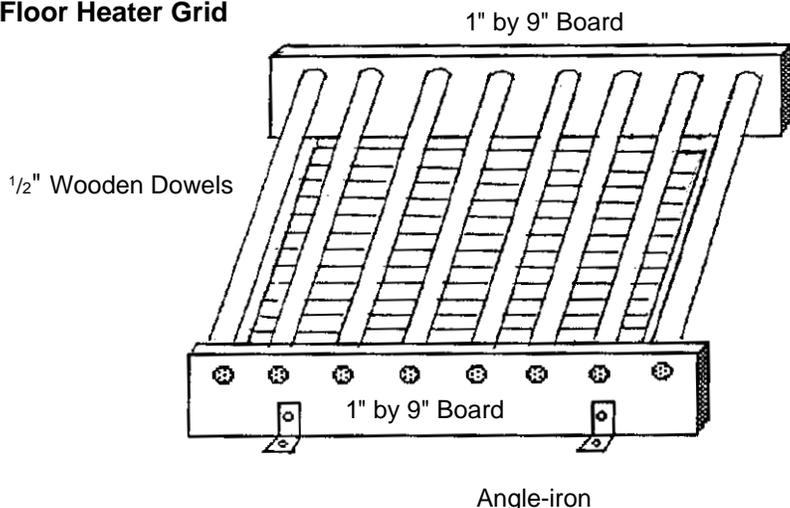


# BANANAS HANDOUT

## Safety Grids For Heaters

Heaters can become very hot while in operation. Grids are used to prevent a child from accidentally falling against or stepping on a hot heater and receiving a serious burn. A grid should be at least 8" away from the surface of the heater so it is not a fire hazard and so the grid itself doesn't become too hot to the touch. It should be attached to the wall or floor so it cannot be tipped over or moved away from the heater. Access doors can be incorporated into the design to allow an adult to reach any heater controls which may be blocked off by the grid. The design and materials should allow for the heat to circulate into the room (what's a heater for after all?) while preventing accidents. For this reason, many grids cannot prevent a child intent on exploring from finding a way to touch the surface of the heater. Never leave small children alone in a room when a wall or floor heater is on. Repeated exposure to high heat can cause a safety grid to erode. You should periodically inspect your grid and replace it if it shows any signs of wear or overheating.

### Floor Heater Grid



You will need:

- Two 1" by 9" boards measured to the length of the floor heater.
- 1/2" wooden dowels (as many as needed to fill in the width of the floor heater).
- Glue, nails or screws to attach dowels.
- Four steel angle-irons or wire to secure grid in place.

Attach dowels to upright boards with nails or screws or drill holes in boards and glue dowels in place.

Dowels must be placed as high away from the surface of the heater as is possible to prevent charring. Periodically check dowels for evidence of overheating. Never leave heaters which have grids attached turned on when no one is home.

Attach the heater grid directly to the floor with angle-irons or wire it to the grill of the heater.

Dowels could also be attached along the open sides of the grid to make it more difficult for a child to touch the surface. If you adapt the design in this manner, make sure your end boards extend at least 8" beyond the edge of the floor heater. This grid design could be adapted for wall heaters. More suggestions for wall heaters and free standing units are on the back of this Handout.

—Thanks to the Berkeley Pediatric Group for this design.

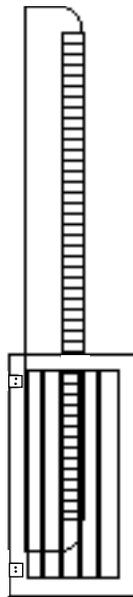
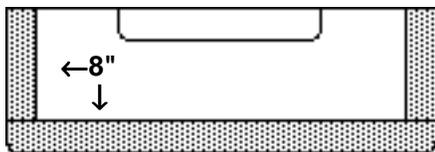
### Other Suggestions For Floor Heaters

Floor heaters can also be screened off with two (or more) commercial fire place screens wired together and placed around the heater. Make sure the metal screens are far enough from the heater to prevent them from becoming a burn hazard. Some of the designs on the next page can be adapted for use with floor heaters.

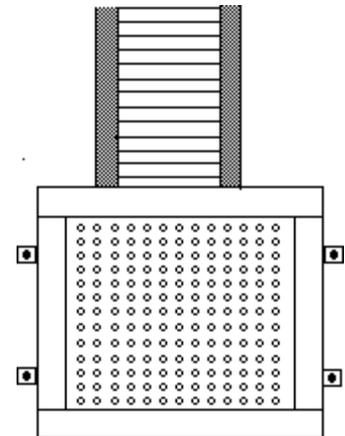
## Wall and Free-Standing Heater Grids

Build a wooden frame which is tall enough (approximately 3') so small children can't reach over it and which has a clearance of 8-10" from the front and sides of the heater. (Some providers have used commercial safety gates for the front section of their frame.) The frame can be rigid or hinged at the corners so it can be folded and stored away during the warmer months. Fill in the frame with porous material which lets the heat out but keeps busy hands away from the heater. Some suggested materials: wood filigree fiberboard, pegboard, aluminum window screening, pine picket fencing, perforated aluminum sheeting. If metal is used to fill in the frame, test a piece of the material 8-10" away from the heater when in operation. Make sure that this is enough clearance so the metal doesn't become too hot to the touch. The finished grid should be sanded (round any sharp corners) and then painted or varnished. Remember to secure the grid to the wall using angle-irons or safety hook and eyes.

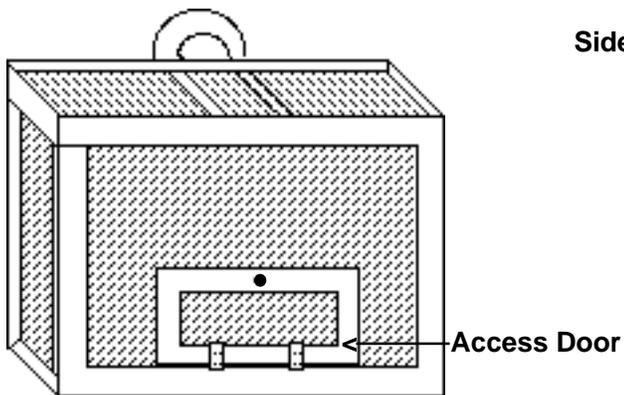
**Top View — Clearance From Heater  
Should Be At Least 8"**



**Side View Using Dowels**

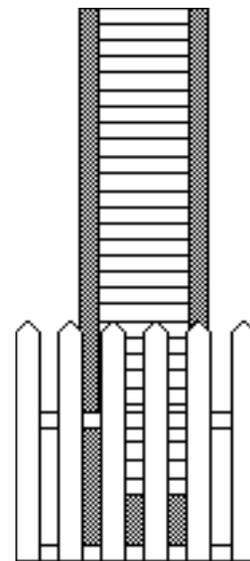


**Front View Using Pegboard**



**Grid for Free Standing Heater Using Window Screening**

—Thanks to Liz Brown for this basic design



**Wall Heater Grid Using Picket Fencing**

Grids can be as plain or fancy as the builder's imagination dictates. The designs suggested in this Handout are just to get you started in building your own. We are interested in hearing from people who have devised other creative suggestions for heater grids which we can use when we update this Handout. Please call 658-7353 or write us to share your ideas. (Special thanks to Fire Marshall Bluford of the Oakland Fire Department for reviewing this Handout prior to its publication.)