

Recommendations on provision of heaters or cash for heating Türkiye Earthquake Response, 2023

Introduction:

The four provinces most affected by the EQ (Adiyaman, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, and Malatya) have average low temperatures down to around 0°C during winter. Containers (especially foldable containers) and tents provide very little insulation and are not livable during the cold winter months without interventions such as heating, insulation, rain protection etc. Shelter partners are providing heaters to households in coordination with authorities. In addition, BNWG (Basic Needs Working Group) partners are providing multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA).

It should be noted that even if affected HHs are not directly provided with heaters by humanitarian organizations, they will find a way to obtain heaters which may not be safe for use in their shelters. Therefore, it is important for partners to supply heaters (or cash for heaters along with educational materials) taking safety measures into consideration.

Risks:

- The electrical supply of container sites or informal clusters may not be sufficient to supply all the HHs using their heaters at once.
- Electrical overload can also take place if heaters and ACs are used at the same time (in container cities where most AFAD standard type containers are fitted with ACs).
- The wiring inside the containers (especially foldable) themselves may not have the capacity for the power required by the heaters, i.e. rewiring could be required with larger cross section wires (to be confirmed by assessment of an electrical engineer).
- Containers (especially foldable) might not have circuit breakers inside them to prevent overloading the electrical system.
- Heaters in close proximity to flammable materials pose a large fire risk and should be kept at least 50 cm away from walls, furniture fabric, etc.

Recommendations:

Fire safety messaging

- Shelter sector strongly recommends that [Fire safety messaging](#) should be distributed with all heater distributions or any other winterization interventions, in coordination with authorities, to increase HHs' awareness on fire safety and help mitigate fire risks.

Coordination

Provision of heaters must be coordinated with authorities and Shelter sector. Authorities are working towards electrical upgrades of sites and rural areas (in Malatya, AFAD has upgraded the interior wiring for 3000 containers in rural areas). It is important to coordinate the timeline of upgrade and wattage of heaters with authorities. This can be done in coordination with the Shelter and TSS hub focal points for the different provinces.

Type of heaters

- A) Electric Oil-based

As discussed with Shelter TWG and authorities, electric oil-based heaters are the safest option for heating containers where electricity is available. Because they are electric instead of combustion based, they don't exhaust dangerous fumes and don't use fire as a heat source, decreasing the risk to the shelter. They further reduce fire risks by their lack of exposed heating coils and lower power needs than other electric heaters. Shelter Sector recommends an assessment of the site be done by an electrical engineer to determine electrical capacity and accordingly purchase heaters with the lower average required wattage to mitigate concerns of insufficient wiring inside containers and lack of electrical supply in container sites.

- B) Combustion-based (stove heaters)

For areas without access to sufficient electricity, combustion heaters can be provided. These heaters carry inherent extra risks both from fire and dangerous exhaust. Because of this, additional education should be given to beneficiaries to ensure they can mitigate these issues as much as possible. Shelter sector recommends the use of olive pomace fuel as an alternative to wood or coal since it is more environmentally friendly and releases less quantity of dangerous fumes, and it is available in Turkish markets.



Example- electric oil-based heater



Olive pomace fuel