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## Heat Lamp Safely

2025 greeted southeast Kansas with a blast of winter weather. During cold weather, a common way to provide extra heat for animals is to use a heat lamp. However, it is important to hang the heat lamp safely to prevent it from falling and starting a fire.

Before hanging up the heat lamp look it over to ensure there are no loose or frayed wires and wipe off any dust and cobwebs that may have accumulated. While it can be convenient to use baling twine to hang a heat lamp, the safer option is to hang the lamp using wire, heavy rope, or chain as animals can easily chew through baling twine. When hanging the lamp do not hang it from its cord and try to keep the cord out of the animals' reach to prevent them from chewing on it (the cord can also be run through a piece of PVC pipe to prevent animals from chewing on it). Instead, attach a chain or wire to the loop on the top of the lamp to hang it. Some heat lamps come with a clamp to hang them. If using the clamp, it is still recommended to hang the lamp with a rope or chain to make sure the lamp is secure and will not fall if an animal knocks the clamp loose. When hanging the heat lamp hang it about 20 inches above the ground for the animals that will be using it and safely above any bedding being used. Ensure it is hung securely, so it will not fall if an adult animal were to kick or headbutt it.

When purchasing heat lamp bulbs, buy hard glass bulbs as these are made of thicker glass which is harder to break if the lamp were to fall. Also, check the bulbs in your heat lamp periodically to make sure they have not come loose in the socket. Like bulbs, purchase quality heat lamps that are sturdily made and have a cage over the bulb. If you must use a heat lamp that does not have a cage over the bulb, chicken wire or wire mesh can be used to make a cage to attach to the heat lamp.

An additional precaution you can take, if you have the option to, is to plug the heat lamp into an Arc Fault Interrupter breaker which will trip if the fixture sparks and keeping a fire extinguisher where it is easy to grab if needed is always a good idea.

On the subject of heat lamps, a gadget that I have found handy is a "thermo cube". When a heat lamp is plugged into a thermo cube it will automatically be turned on when the temperature drops to 35 degrees and will automatically be turned off when it reaches 45 degrees.

For more information contact Adaven Rohling, Diversified Agriculture and Natural Resource Agent Wildcat District, at 620-331-2690 or [adaven@ksu.edu](mailto:adaven@ksu.edu).

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