

FAQs

Q: Why choose an electric heater, rather than a gas heater?

A: Simply put, electric heaters look better, are more efficient and are easier to operate and maintain. Electric heaters are over 90% efficient and are perfectly safe for use indoors or outdoors. They are also economical to operate and require little maintenance beyond periodic cleaning. Unlike gas heaters, there are no valves, ignition components, moving parts or burners to maintain or repair. In addition, electric heaters produce no sound, odors or toxic emissions.

Electric heaters also offer added mounting and installation options. They may be flush mounted into a standard 8' ceiling using our flush mount frame. When surface mounted, they hang less than 9-1/2" from the ceiling. The most commonly used overhead gas heater requires a minimum ceiling height of almost 10' and, when mounted properly, will hang almost 24" below it.

An electric heater is also easier to use. Enjoying electric comfort heat is as easy as flipping a switch. You can adjust the intensity of an electric heater infinitely from zero to 100% of power. By contrast, gas heaters only produce infrared energy on their highest possible settings.

Q: How can I estimate my cost of operation?

A: Electric heaters are economical to operate. It is easy to estimate your operating cost by multiplying the total kilowatts by your local power rate for a "kilowatt hour" (kwh). Standard power rates vary from market to market. Your rate should appear on any monthly utility statement. For example, a typical 3,000 watt (3 KW) heater, at full power, would cost 39¢ per hour based on a utility rate of 13¢ per kwh. Also keep in mind that your electric heater has a lower acquisition cost.

Q: Can I run my heaters on only 120 volts of power?

A: Using a 110/120-volt heater (1,500 watts maximum) is fine for enclosed areas like garages, indoor work areas or outdoor spaces no larger than 5' x 5'. When heating larger areas, running a dedicated 110/120-volt circuit is not practical or economical. A 240-volt circuit will require the same amount of wiring, will heat substantially larger areas with greater comfort, and will simply require two spaces in the breaker panel, rather than one.

Q: Should I purchase Infratech solid-state controls?

A: Infratech solid-state controls give you the most efficient and versatile form of control for your heaters. While other lower cost controls are available, if your space calls for larger heaters or multiple heaters, solid-state controls quickly become your best choice for a quality installation. Contact us and let our qualified staff help you configure the best heaters and controls for your project.

Q: How long can I expect an Infratech quartz element to last?

A: Infratech elements are rated for 5,000 hours of continuous use. In many installations you may enjoy your heater for years before a replacement would be needed. Always refer to the W-Series manual for specific instructions, and be sure to disconnect the power to your heater before attempting to change an element.

Q: Are quartz elements better than "short wave" halogen elements?

A: If you are concerned about ambience, the appearance of your décor and creating a more relaxing environment, Infratech infrared quartz elements are always the best choice. Infratech quartz elements provide comfortable medium wave heat. Competitive products with short wave halogen elements produce more intense heat while emitting very bright and harsh-colored light. By contrast, Infratech medium wave elements effectively heat your space, while providing a soft, warm glow that is practically unnoticeable.

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Q: How do I determine how many heaters I will need?

A: Please visit the "Getting Started" page for simple steps to help you select the right heaters and control options for your space. For professional assistance, you may be required to submit some basic information about your area to be heated. We are happy to help you design a system that will satisfy your needs and your budget.

Q: What's the difference between 208-volt and 240-volt power?

A: Many new homes and businesses are supplied with 208-volt power, as opposed to the more familiar 240-volt option. It is very important to determine your power voltage before ordering and installing a heater. A 240-volt heater on 208 volts of power will only produce about 60% of the desired infrared energy. Contact the marketing department of your local utility or consult a licensed electrician to determine the proper power for your property. Infatech heaters are available in single and dual element 120, 208, 240, 277 and 480-volt models.

Q: How small of a heater can I use?

A: Always choose a heater size with the appropriate heat output for the mounting height and area to cover. By selecting a smaller unit, you may require more heaters to get the same amount of heat output. If you are choosing a dual element unit for aesthetic purposes, you will be concentrating more heat into a tighter space. Again, this may mean that you will possibly require more fixtures to provide total coverage of your area. Patio heating is often a compromise between functionality and finding the desired look.

Q: How much heat should I expect?

A: At their Food Services Testing Center, Pacific Gas & Electric has determined that a good patio heat installation (gas or electric) will provide between 3-7° of perceived heat at 60° F ambient conditions. Test results determined that more than 7° is too warm to sit in for extended periods. Colder or draftier areas may require more heat; protected or warmer areas may require less. Every installation will vary, along with our customers' expectations.

Q: Does an electric heater cost more than a gas unit to operate?

A: Operating costs vary by region. Nationwide, electric heaters are less expensive than propane, and are competitive with natural gas. Depending upon the total hours of usage, electric heaters normally have a much lower cost of ownership when factoring in purchase price and maintenance needs. Basically, this means that while it can cost more per hour to operate an electric unit in some areas, it typically takes 7-10 years to save enough money operating on gas to recover the substantially higher purchase price-not to mention cost of regular maintenance for a gas heater.

Q: What are your safety certificates?

A: Infratech W Series heaters are Underwriters Laboratories (UL) and Canadian Underwriters Laboratories (cUL) Listed under File E 29825. We are NZ/Australia and CE Listed under Wakefield Laboratories File NSW 21732. The W Series fixtures are also certified IP X4 rated.

Q: Can I operate Infratech heaters from home lighting controls or home management systems?

A: Yes. There are two ways to integrate our solid-state controls into your home management system. One permits on/off and timer functionality only, by switching the 120-volt power to the analog remote. The second way allows for full integration with our controls designed to accept a 0-10-volt DC signal from the home management system, to vary the intensity of the heaters. Contact us for a complete consultation.