



TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS OF ILLINOIS RISK MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

RISK REMINDER

Block Heater Safety

An engine block heater warms the engine and its fluids before cold-weather starts. This reduces strain on the starter and battery, improves ignition, and prevents wear caused by thickened oil.

Safety & Maintenance Checks

- Inspect the block heater cord before each use. Replace heaters with cracked, frayed, scorched or exposed wiring. Continued use poses a fire hazard.
- Use only outdoor-rated extension cords with a GFCI to reduce shock risk.
- Keep cords uncovered; never run them under rugs, mats, or anything that traps heat.
- Use only one block heater per cord per outlet to avoid overload.
- A tripped breaker may indicate a shorted heating element that needs replaced.
- If the engine block stays cold after the recommended plug-in time, the element may be burned out and needs replacement.
- Always unplug block heater before driving.

Fire-Prevention Tips

- Replace any block heater or cord showing wear or damage.
- Keep cords visible, elevated, and unobstructed to prevent overheating.
- Use a timer. Most engines need only 2–4 hours of heating. Leaving the heater on too long increases fire risk.



For more information, contact TOIRMA at (888) 562-7861

CLAIM REPORTING HOTLINE (844) 562-2720 | Available 24/7