

# Jonathan Rosenfeld's Nursing Homes Abuse Blog

## Stupidity Plain & Simple To Blame For Series Of Portable Heater Burns To Nursing Home Patients

*Posted at 5:14 AM on June 3, 2010 by Jonathan Rosenfeld*

Perhaps one of the more frustrating aspects of my job as a nursing home lawyer is the fact that so many nursing home employees forget to bring their common sense to work.



Though there seems to be a never ending array of federal and state nursing home regulations, the regulations really mean nothing if employees forget to use common sense and good judgment.

Though some nursing home abuse and neglect cases stem from extremely complex medical complications, a substantial number of injuries to nursing home patients occur simply due to the fact that some one made a stupid mistake.

If placing a space heater within inches of a bed-bound patient doesn't count as mark in the stupid category, then then I'm not sure what would. Recently, the [Star Tribune](#) reported that five nursing home patients were seriously injured in portable heater mishaps in Minnesota nursing homes over the past year.

The Star Tribune report highlights the following heater mishaps where the Department of Health confirmed the facilities acted in a negligent manner:

- January, 2009- An Alzheimer's patient at Golden Living-Meadow Lane sustained first and second degree burns after staff discovered the patient on a radiator.

Jonathan Rosenfeld represents victims of nursing home abuse and neglect throughout the country. For more information please visit Nursing Homes Abuse Blog ([www.nursinghomesabuseblog.com](http://www.nursinghomesabuseblog.com)), Bed Sore FAQ ([www.bedsorefaq.com](http://www.bedsorefaq.com)) or call Jonathan directly at (888) 424-5757.

- November, 2009- Nursing home staff discovered a nursing home patient suffering from dementia and restless leg syndrome who had managed to wiggle her leg out of bed and into contact with the electric heat register that was placed directly adjacent to her bed sore. When staff discovered the patient, her foot had become so severely blistered that the height of the foot had nearly doubled.
- December, 2009- A patient at Gracepointe Cross Gabled West suffered severe burns to her fingers after staff discovered a heat register that was placed within one inch from her bed.
- January, 2010- Second-degree burns were discovered on a hospice patient at Benedictine Health Center after her leg came into contact with a heating element.
- A patient at Redeemer Health and Rehab sustained second and third-degree burns after coming into contact with a radiator. The patient died four weeks later.

Most of the above situations resulted in sanctions against the facility due to the fact that investigators in the above situations noted that facilities failed to "ensure that the resident environment was free of accident hazards."

Can we add a new citation category for just plain old 'bad judgment'?

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[Burns In The Nursing Home Population Pose A Serious Threat Of Injury & Further Medical Complications](#)

[Even The Most Mundane Parts Of A Nursing Home Can Turn Deadly Without Proper Staff Supervision](#)

[Smoking-Related Fires Are A Real Threat To Nursing Home Patients. Is It Time To Put Out The Fire?](#)

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