

Over the last three years incidents have occurred at the university where hot water urns were being used. These incidents have placed people at risk of serious injury.

These incidents have occurred when urns were set up on a folding plastic top tables.

One incident resulted when a plastic table collapsed under the weight of the urn.

In another incident the urn was set up across the join of two folding tables and the urn fell onto floor.

Recently, multiple urns have been set up on plastic folding tables, exceeding the load capacity of the table.

The use of electric hot water urns creates several hazards such as:

- Major skin or eye burns where a large volume of hot water is spilt e.g. if an urn falls over
- The weight of a full urn/s may result in a folding table to collapse
- Trip hazards where power cords are placed in walkways. This may also result in major burns if the urn is pulled off the table
- Electric shock e.g. where an extension lead is used and water is spilt on the connection
- Burns from direct contact with hot surfaces of a metal urn
- Steam burns when lifting the urn lid to check water levels
- Slips and falls from walking in spilt water
- Manual handling associated with filling up and emptying the urn or moving the urn

Recommendations:

Avoid the use of electric hot water urns where possible. This can be done by using UoM preferred suppliers when catering for events and request flask type hot water or coffee dispensers instead of urns.

Where it is not possible to use hot water flasks, always set an urn up on a fixed bench or table. **Never** set an urn up on a folding table.

