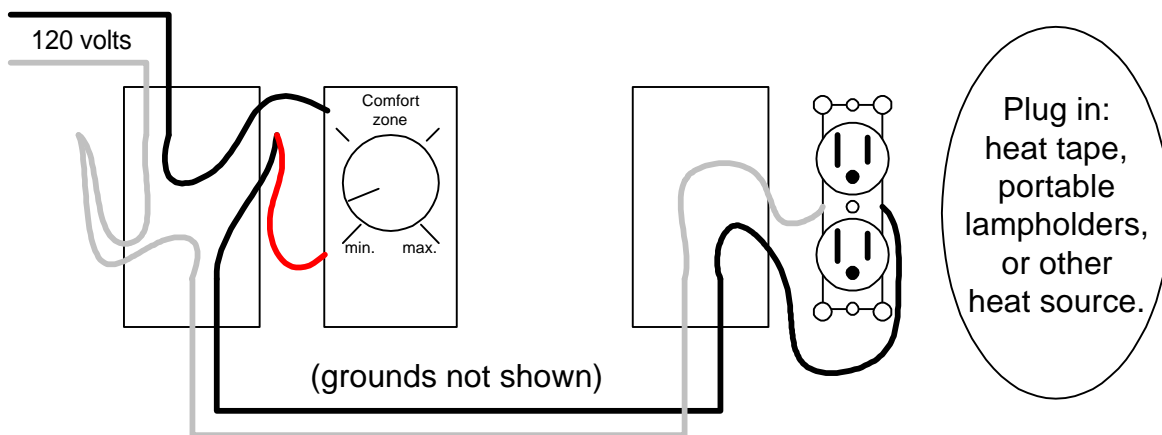


Heat Tape and Freeze Protection

In the Pacific Northwest we get about two weeks to a month of freezing weather each year. Building supply stores and electrical wholesale houses carry many types of heat tape. Some heat tape products come in pre-cut lengths that have plug in cords already installed, and some can be purchased by the foot. When purchased by the foot, non-heat leads must be spliced to the heat tape for connection to supply voltage. Follow manufacturer's instructions for making these terminations.

Some heat tape comes with a metal braid around the outside for physical protection. Some of the more expensive products are self-regulating in that the colder it gets, the more current it draws and produces more heat. In a pump house that can be insulated, a simple incandescent light bulb may be enough to keep pipes from freezing, but long runs of water pipe are best protected by heat tape covered with an approved insulating jacket. Here are some drawings and suggestions about how you can make freeze protection turn on and off automatically with the use of a simple baseboard thermostat.



This method of controlling a receptacle with a baseboard thermostat is probably better than connecting the heat tape directly to the thermostat. It provides some flexibility, and a means of disconnecting the heat source from the supply voltage. Be sure that ALL conductive surfaces of components of the system are properly and effectively grounded.

Whether troubleshooting electrical problems, or making a new installation, Safety should be the number one concern. The right tools and test instruments, and the knowledge to complete the task, are the ingredients for success.

There are countless sources of information that are available at little or no cost. Safeguard yourself and everyone that will use the electrical system you install, by being properly equipped before you begin an electrical project.

