



### **Heat Tape Philosophy Statement**

Heat tape has applications in many different locations in a historic house. It can be wrapped around pipes to prevent freezing in un-insulated areas or it can be used to prevent ice dams. Both of these installations are intended to avoid water damage to the building. When used to help alleviate ice dams, the heat tape can alter the appearance of the house and thus its use should be considered in a thoughtful and sensitive manner.

### **Heat Tape Guidelines and Technical Details**

- Different heat tape applications call for different versions of heat tape (heat tape appropriate for outdoor gutter applications differs from heat tape appropriate for indoor plumbing applications).
- Identify the target areas.
  - The target area may only be one section of roof or gutter or it may be multiple areas.
  - The target area may be one pipe or a collection of pipes.
- Determine scope of work for heat tape.
  - Heat tape can be installed along lengths of pipe to prevent freezing.
    - Installing the incorrect version of heat tape can melt plastic pipes.
    - Installing tape on leaking pipes is a hazard.
    - Ensure attachment methodology is reversible.
  - Heat tape can be applied in many different ways on roofs and gutters. In order to ensure that aesthetic concerns are being matched with preservation concerns the following must be considered first.
    - Run heat tape along the bottom of a gutter and down the down spouts and drain pipes.
    - Consider running heat tape along valleys in problematic roofs if it can be done discretely.
    - Consider temporary installations of heat tape that can be removed seasonally.
    - Ensure all attachments are reversible.
  - Specify the appropriate control mechanism for the heat tape.
    - Heat tape can be self regulating and temperature based. This requires no person to turn the tape on, however it also means the tape is on in all cold whether, not just when needed.
    - Heat tape can also be applied with a switch that allows site staff to turn the heat tape on just before a storm. This requires access to the switch in order for it to be effective.
- If a visible application of heat tape is required a written analysis and assessment of the issue is necessary as well as the recommendation for heat tape application for the team leader of property care to present to Historic New England's *Proactive Preservation and Interpretation Planning* committee.