



## Are You Burning Candles Safely?

Candles help create the perfect ambiance. However, if not properly used, they can also present a dangerous fire hazard.

Candle fires reached a 20-year high of 15,040 in 1999, resulting in 102 deaths, 1,473 civilian injuries and \$278 million in property damage, according to the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) most recent records. Of home candle fires, almost half (44%) start in the bedroom, and the leading cause cited (37%) is unattended, abandoned, or inadequately controlled candles.

By following a few simple safety procedures, you can limit the risk of candle fires to yourself, your family, and your neighbors:

- Never leave a lit candle unattended. Extinguish all candles when leaving a room or going to sleep.
- Use sturdy candleholders that are made from materials that can't burn and are large enough to collect dripping wax.
- Place candles on an uncluttered, heat-resistant surface and keep them out of the reach of children and pets.
- Keep candles away from flammable liquids and away from items that can catch on fire (i.e. clothing, books, curtains, drapes, lampshades, bedding, etc.).
- Burn candles in a well-ventilated room, away from drafts and vents.
- Keep candlewicks trimmed to 1/4" prior to use and extinguish taper and pillar candles when they get to within 2" of the holder or decorative materials. Votives and containers should be extinguished before the last 1/2" of wax starts to melt. Make sure matches, wick trimmings, and foreign objects are kept out of candle wax.

*Tips adapted from the National Fire Protection Association and National Candle Association.*

For additional information:

National Fire Protection Association, <http://www.nfpa.org>

National Candle Association, <http://www.candles.org>

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