

# Candle Fire Safety

Article Courtesy of U.S. Fire Administration and FEMA

## Causes and Circumstances of Home Candle Fires

- On average, 42 home candle fires are reported every day.
- More than half of all candle fires start when something that could burn, such as furniture, mattresses or bedding, curtains, or decorations is too close to the candle.
- In one-fifth (20%) of candle fires, the candles are unattended or abandoned.
- Over one-third (36%) of home candle fires begin in the bedroom.
- Falling asleep is a factor in 12% of home candle fires and 36% of the associated deaths.
- December is the peak time of year for home candle fires. In December, 13% of home candle fires begin with decorations compared to 4% the rest of the year.
- One-half of home candle fire deaths occur between Midnight and 6 am.
- Young children and older adults have the highest death risk from candle fires.
- The risk of fatal candle fires appears higher when candles are used for light.

Sources: NFIRS, NFPA

## Candle Safety Tips

- Consider using battery-operated or electric flameless candles and fragrance warmers, which can look, smell and feel like real candles – without the flame.
- If you do use candles, ensure they are in sturdy metal, glass or ceramic holders and placed where they cannot be easily knocked down.
- Avoid using candles in bedrooms and sleeping areas.
- Extinguish candles after use and before going to bed.
- Keep candles at least 12 inches from anything that can burn.
- Keep candles out of the reach of children and pets.
- Set a good example by using matches, lighters and fire carefully.
- Children should never be allowed to play with matches, lighters or candles.
- Never use a candle where medical oxygen is being used. The two can combine to create a large, unexpected fire.
- Always use a flashlight – not a candle – for emergency lighting.
- Never put candles on a Christmas tree.
- When using in home worship, don't place lit candles in windows, where blinds and curtains can close over them, or pass handheld candles from one person to another. To lower the risk of fire, candles should be used by only a few designated adults.
- And NEVER leave burning candles unattended!