

Safety Tips Candles

The growing popularity of candles has spawned all-time highs in the number of fires started by candles (12,540 in 1998, for example, which killed 157 people and caused \$176 million in property damage). About a third of these fires broke out when people left candles unattended and didn't use them carefully. About a fifth of the fires started when people put candles too close to something. According to the NFPA, December is the month when fires caused by candles are most common. Nearly half of home candle fires start in the bedroom.

1. When you leave a room or go to bed, put out all candles. Don't trust a candle holder to contain a lit candle.
2. Don't put candles near things that burn: books, newspaper, tablecloths, clothing, wall hangings, pictures, curtains. Window sills, in particular, are not good places for lit candles.
3. When you buy a candle holder, look for several features: it should be hard to tip over, made from a material that won't burn, and should be able to catch melted wax. If you have a decorative holder that is flammable, keep a close eye on candles in it and put them out before the flame gets near the holder.
4. Make sure that kids and pets can't get near candles.
5. If a candle's wick gets too long, it can produce a dangerously large flame.
6. Don't buy candles that have flammable things embedded in them.
7. Don't leave children alone in rooms with candles.
8. Keep candles, matches and lighters in a high cabinet that children can't see or reach.
9. When the power goes out, you can light candles but don't carry them around. Have a flashlight if you need to walk around and find supplies, your cell phone or other things.
10. Don't use a candle to check the pilot light on a stove, or to examine kerosene heaters or lanterns.