



Candles & Fire Safety - Protect Your Family

Candles are very popular ways to add a lot of ambiance to a home. The light they create makes a room look attractive and their various scents are enjoyable. They are used in times of celebration, relaxation, romance, as decoration - even as a light source when the power goes out! With all of their pleasant uses it's not easy to recognize that candles can be dangerous and should be used with care.

CANDLES PRESENT A HAZARD TO YOUR FAMILY

Candles present a significant fire hazard as well as risk of physical injuries - even death, in many circumstances. Take a look at some of the causes and circumstances of home candle fires:

- Candle use is a leading cause of house fires.
- More than half of all candle fires start when something that could burn, such as furniture, mattresses or bedding, curtains, or decorations are too close to the candle.
- In 20% of candle fires, the candles are unattended or abandoned.
- Over 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 6am when people are sleeping and most vulnerable.
- Young children and older adults have the highest death risk from candle fires.

Sources: NFIRS, NFPA

**On average
about 16,000 people
are injured
or killed in
household fires
each year.**

ELIMINATE THE RISK

The best safety tip is to try and avoid using candles altogether. There are many new products and alternatives in the marketplace that can help you eliminate this hazard while still enjoying the same benefits of smell and feel that you appreciate from using candles – without the actual flame – such as:

- Battery-operated or electric flameless candles.
- Fragrance warmers & wickless candles.
- Electric Potpourri pot/warmers

CANDLE SAFETY TIPS

If you do decide to use candles, use them sparingly and be mindful of the following safety tips which do not diminish the ambiance or pleasure of candle use:

- Make sure all smoke detectors in the home are working properly by pushing the test button.
- Ensure all candles are in sturdy metal, glass or ceramic holders and placed where they cannot be easily knocked over.
- Avoid using candles in bedrooms and sleeping areas.
- Extinguish candles after use and before going to bed.
- Never leave the room without being assured the candle is out.
- Keep candles out of the reach of children and pets.
- Always use a flashlight – not a candle – for emergency lighting.
- Never put candles on or near a Christmas tree or other holiday decorations.
- Don't place lit candles in windows, where blinds and curtains can close over them.
- If using matches to light a candle, extinguish them in water before throwing them away. The paper in a waste-basket could easily ignite from a match that still has a glowing ember.
- And NEVER leave burning candles unattended!

**Every year,
candles cause
more than
10,000 home fires.
5,000 are in
December.**

IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE

Remember, time is the biggest enemy and every second counts!

- Escape first, and then call for help.
- Never stand up in a fire, always crawl low under the smoke, and try to keep your mouth covered.
- Never return to a burning building for any reason: it may cost you your life.
- Develop a home fire escape plan and practice it frequently with your family.
- Designate a meeting place outside.
- Make sure everyone in the family knows two ways to escape from every room.

FINAL NOTE

Test your smoke alarms regularly to make sure they are working. If they are not, contact Balfour Beatty Communities immediately for maintenance.