

Fire & Life Safety Information Bulletin

“Candle Safety Tips”

Candles are no longer used for the occasional dinner party. Residents now use candles in their living rooms, family rooms, dens and bathrooms. Candles may become hazardous when used improperly or in an unsafe manner. Reduce the chance of a fire, by following these simple safety tips." The Sutter County Fire Department recommends the following when burning candles:

- Keep candles in sight and extinguish them when leaving a room or before going to sleep.
- Keep burning candles at least three feet away from furniture, drapes, bedding, carpets, books, paper, flammable decorations, and other combustible materials.
- Keep candles out of the reach of children and pets. Do not place lighted candles where they can be knocked over. Do not allow candles in a child's room.
- Read and carefully follow all manufacturer instructions. Do not burn a candle for longer than the manufacturer recommends.
- Trim candlewicks to 1/4 inch each time before burning. Long or crooked wicks cause uneven burning and dripping.
- Always use a candleholder specifically designed for candle use. The holder should be heat resistant, sturdy and large enough to contain any drips or melted wax. Be sure the candleholder is placed on a stable, heat-resistant surface.
- Keep burning candles away from drafts, vents and air currents. This will help prevent rapid, uneven burning, smoking and excessive dripping. Drafts and ceiling fans can also blow lightweight curtains or papers into the flame where they could catch fire.
- Never touch or move a votive or container when the wax is liquid. Allow candle to cool before trimming wick, relighting or replacing a lid.
- Extinguish pillar candles if the wax pool approaches the outer edge.
- One of the safest ways to extinguish a candle is to use a candlesnuffer, which helps prevent hot wax from spattering. Do not leave the room until the wick stops glowing.
- Flashlights and other battery-powered lights are a safer light sources than candles during a power failure.
- Never use a candle as light when you go into a closet to look for things.
- Never use candlelight when fueling equipment such as a lantern or heater. The flame can ignite the fumes.
- A well-made candle should not soot or smoke when burning properly. However, noticeable smoking will occur whenever a candle's flame is disturbed, which allows unburned carbon particles (soot) to escape. In fact, any candle can be made to smoke by causing the flame to flicker.
- Avoid walking with lit candles.
- Keep candles away from flammable liquids.
- Light candles carefully, Keeping hair and clothing away from the flame.
- Store matches and lighters up high, out of sight or preferably in a locked cabinet.
- If your clothes catch of fire stop what you're doing, drop to the ground, and roll around while covering your face until the flames are put out.
- Extinguish the flame if it comes too close to holder or container. Discontinue using the candle when 2 inches of wax remains. (1/2 inch if in a container). This can also prevent heat damage to the holder and surface.
- Be very cautious during the holidays and keep candles away from Christmas Trees, decorations and centerpieces.