



CANDLE FIRES

Fast Facts

- Between 2000 – 2004 an estimated 20,900 home fires were caused by candles, claiming 200 lives, injuring 1,790 people, and resulting in \$459 million in property damage.***
- 38 percent of home candle fires start in bedrooms, and cause 35 percent of associated deaths.***
- More than half of all candle home fires start because the candle was too close to a combustible material. Candle fires often start when items like mattresses, bedding, curtains, cabinetry, or furniture are ignited.***
- In 12 percent of home candle fires and in 25 percent of associated deaths and injuries, the household occupants were asleep when the fire occurred.***
- Unsupervised children are involved in 20 percent of home candle fires.***
- The number of home fires the American Red Cross has responded to has risen 10% since 2000.*
- Having a working smoke alarm reduces one's chances of dying in a fire by nearly half.**

Preparedness Tips

- ✓ Remember that lit candles are fire. Keep them at least 12 inches from anything that can burn, such as curtains, bedding, mattresses, paper, books, flammable decorations, clothing, and upholstered furniture.
- ✓ Always extinguish candles before leaving the room or going to bed. Do not leave a room before blowing out all candles.
- ✓ Use candle holders that are sturdy, won't tip over easily, are made from a material that cannot burn, and are large enough to collect dripping wax.
- ✓ Place candles where they cannot be reached or knocked over by pets and children.
- ✓ During an emergency, always use flashlights and not candles as light sources.
- ✓ Never leave a child unattended in a room with a candle. And keep all matches and lighters out of reach and out of site of children.
- ✓ Keep all lit candles and other open flames away from any flammable liquids.
- ✓ Smoke alarms save lives. Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home and use the test button to check each alarm each month. Replace all batteries at least once a year.
- ✓ Visit www.redcross.org/homefires for more information on how to keep your home fire safe.