
CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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RELEASE
DATE: December 17, 2012

Californians Asked To “Candle with Care” December is Peak of Home Candle Fires

Sacramento – Candles may be pretty to look at, but they become a fire hazard when left unattended. CAL FIRE and fire departments across the State are asking everyone to “Candle with Care” and practice basic steps to prevent injuries and costly property damage from candles.

December is the peak time of year for home fires caused by candles, as they are a common holiday decoration. More than half of these fires occur when candles are placed too close to combustible materials. Roughly one-third of home candle fires start in the bedroom.

“Statistics show that most candle fire incidents in California are due to unattended candles as well as residents not taking the necessary fire safety measures when using candles,” said State Fire Marshal Tonya Hoover, CAL FIRE-Office of the State Fire Marshal. “Candle fires are preventable! By practicing some basic fire safety, you can protect your family from a fire tragedy.”

CAL FIRE offers these fire safety tips for candle use for this holiday season and all year long:

- Blow out all candles when you leave the room, go to bed, or leave your home.
- Avoid using candles in bedrooms and other areas where people may fall asleep or leave them unattended.
- Use candle holders that are sturdy and won’t tip over easily.
- Keep candles out of the reach of children and pets.
- Always burn candles in a well-ventilated room.
- Keep candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn.
- NEVER use candles on a Christmas tree.
- Use a candle snuffer to extinguish the candle flame and prevent hot candle wax from spattering.
- Consider using battery-operated flameless candles.

In addition to practicing good candle fire safety, CAL FIRE reminds everyone to make sure they have working smoke alarms in the home. “Extra attention to fire safety in your home will help you, your family and visitors have a happy and safe holiday season and don’t require an emergency visit from the fire department,” said Chief Ken Pimlott, Director of CAL FIRE.

For more fire safety tips, please visit the CAL FIRE website at www.fire.ca.gov.