

KEEP THE FIRES BURNING SAFELY DURING THE HOLIDAYS AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



Thoughts of lit candles conjure up idyllic and wonderful scenes. While candles are a beautiful addition to holiday decor, if not used properly, they can be deadly. That's why the Sheboygan Fire Department is reminding you of the need for care and caution with your candles.

Candle fires are four times more likely to occur during the winter holidays than any other time of year. The top three holidays for candle fires (2012 – 2016) were Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day with the month of December being the peak month when candle fire incidents nearly doubled. In December, 11% of candle fires began with candle decorations, a 7% increase in comparison to the rest of the year. Nineteen percent (one out of five), home fires occurred when candles were unattended or abandoned. More than half, 56%, of those candle fires occurred when combustible items were too close to the candle.

The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) suggests the following candle safety tips to keep you and your loved ones fire-safe throughout the year:

- Use sturdy candle holders that won't tip over easily and are made from a material that cannot burn, such as metal, ceramic or glass and are large enough to collect dripping wax.
- When lighting candles, be sure to keep your hair and loose clothing away from the flame.
- Protect candle flames with glass covers/chimneys or containers.
- Extinguish all candles when leaving the room or going to sleep.
- Keep candles at least 12 inches away from things that can burn/catch fire, like clothing, books, curtains, silk and dried flower arrangements, holiday decorations and Christmas trees.
- People are fascinated by a flickering candle and children and pets are no exception, therefore, keep children and pets away from burning candles.
- NEVER leave a child or pet unsupervised in a room with a lighted candle.
- Keep matches and lighters safely out of a child's reach, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Keep candles and all open flames away from flammable liquids.
- NEVER use a candle when oxygen is present.
- Keep candle wicks trimmed to 1/4 inch and extinguish the flame when they get to within two inches of the holder.
- Votive candles and containers should be extinguished before the last 1/2 inch of wax starts to melt.
- For emergency lighting, use flashlights NEVER use candles.

Rather than using candles in bedrooms and sleeping areas, The Sheboygan Fire Department suggests using battery-operated flameless candles, which provide the ambiance of a real candle and your peace of mind.

Have a Happy and Safe Holiday Season,

The Sheboygan Fire Department

