



Fire and Rescue Department

Fairfax County

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Use Caution When Burning Candles

Candles, when properly used, can provide ambiance as well as add warmth and coziness in a home. Additionally, candles are often used when severe weather causes a power outage, leaving homeowners in the dark. According to 2001 United States Fire Administration statistics, approximately 11,000 candle-related fires occurred in residential occupancies throughout the country. In that same year, there were 1,200 injuries and 110 fatalities attributed to candle-related fires.

Since January 2003, candle or incense misuse has resulted in 14 separate residential fires in Fairfax County.

The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department recommends residents use products such as battery-operated or electric candles and flashlights. If citizens elect to use open-flame candles, the following safety measures are recommended:

- Do not place candles near combustible materials such as upholstered furniture, newspapers and magazines.
- Never leave children unattended in a room with an open flame candle.
- Do not place candles on window ledges or near entryways. The potential air draft can "fan" the flame, catching curtains or other materials on fire.
- Do keep burning candles within sight at all times. Candles can present fire hazard outdoors on decks and patios as well as inside your home.
- Always extinguish candles before leaving the home.
- Remove all packaging before lighting.
- Do use holders designed for the particular candle style.
- Place all candles on a protected, heat resistant, dry surface away from anything that can catch fire and out of the reach of children and pets.

For more information contact the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department or visit your local fire and rescue station.

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