SAFETY TIPS

- Extinguish all candles when leaving the room or before going to sleep.
- Keep candles away from items that can catch fire (such as clothing, books, paper, curtains, Christmas trees, flammable decorations). Remember the 2 foot circle of safety.
- Avoid candles with combustible items embedded in or around them.
- Never leave wick-trimmings, matches or other material in the candle or holder.
- Only use sturdy candle holders made of non-combustible materials.
- Place candle holders on an uncluttered surface. Do not use candles in places where they could be knocked over by children or pets.
- Keep matches, lighters and candles up high out of reach of children.
- Never leave a child unattended in a room with a candle.
- Don't allow children or teens to have candles in their bedrooms/sleeping areas.
- Keep candles and all open flames away from flammable liquids.
- Don't place lighted candles in windows where blinds, curtains and draperies can catch fire. Avoid open windows where drafts could cause candle wick flames to flare up.
- Votives and container candles should be extinguished before the last half-inch of wick starts to melt.

New York State Department of State

David A. Paterson, Governor

Lorraine A. Cortés-Vázquez, Secretary of State

Office of Fire Prevention and Control
Floyd A. Madison, State Fire Administrator

Arson Bureau
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Contact your local fire department

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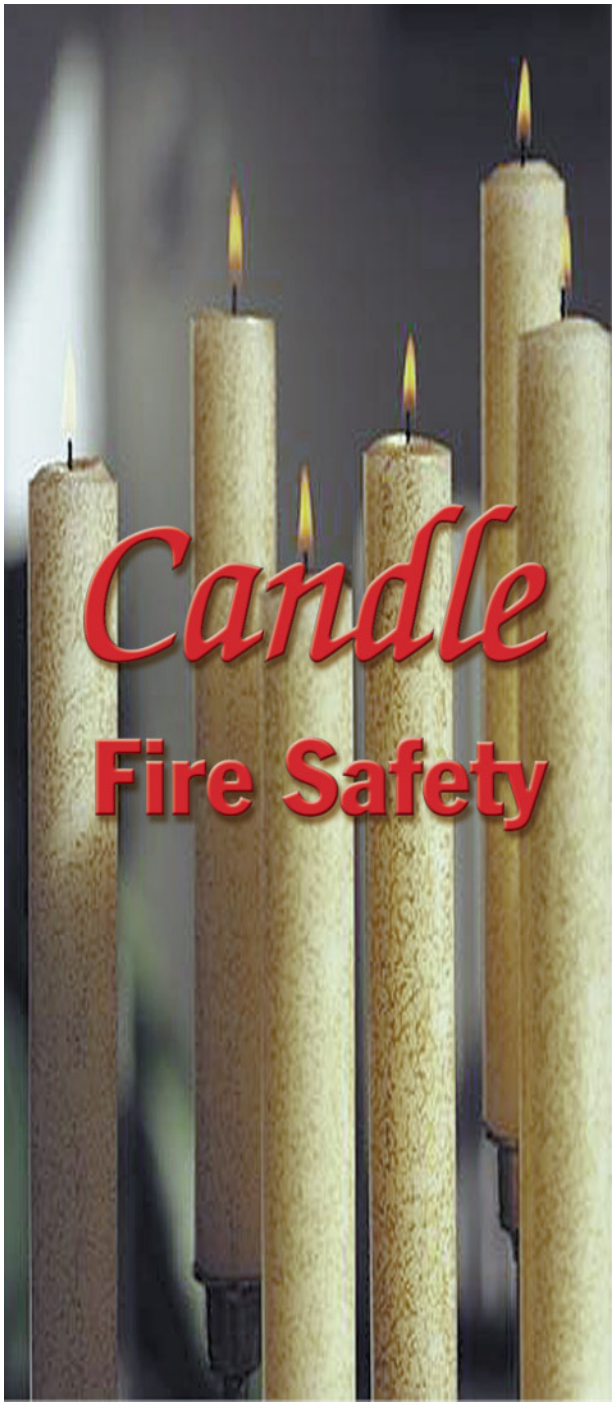

New York State
Office of Fire Prevention and Control

Candles are no longer used for just the occasional dinner party. In fact, only a small percent of candle fires start in dining rooms. Families are lighting candles in their living rooms, family rooms, bedrooms, dens and bathrooms. Candle sales are booming, with candle usage increasing fivefold in the past 10 years alone. Handling candles safely has never been more important than now...

House fires have dropped 50% from 1980 to 1998, while house fires caused by candles increased 31.4% for the same period.

The number of people killed by house fires started by candles has skyrocketed over the last two decades. Nationally, deaths from candle-related fires rose 88.2% between 1980 and 1998. In most cases, unattended candles caused those fatal fires. In 1998, candle fires accounted for 6 percent of all fire deaths.

Where do candle fires start?

Nearly half of all candle fires start in the bedroom, with mattresses or other bedding items the most likely to go up in flames.

- 44% start in bedrooms
- 19% start in living rooms, family rooms or dens
- 11% start in bathrooms
- 7% start in kitchens
- 4% start in dining rooms

Major causes of home candle fires:

- 36% occurred because candles were left unattended, abandoned or inadequately supervised
- 18% occurred because some form of combustible material was left too close
- 9% were started by children playing with candles

Children are naturally attracted to the various colors and shapes of candles.

According to New York State Fire Administrator James Burns, children playing with or near candles is a frequent cause of candle fires. Experience shows us that these fires often result in death or serious injuries to young juveniles.

DON'T LET CHILDREN PLAY WITH CANDLES

Remember...

Candles need room!

Colleges Too . . .

High density living conditions found in most college dormitories makes the use of candles an extremely dangerous practice. Increasingly, reports are coming in statewide of serious fires caused by the improper use of candles in dormitory rooms. While school officials attempt to regulate the use of candles, only YOU can prevent a disastrous fire from destroying your dorm room, dorm building or from taking your life or the life of another.

Do Not Burn Candles in Dormitory type settings!

Use candles wisely. Follow the candle fire safety tips on the back of this pamphlet.

Dormitory room fire caused by candles.