



## Candle Safety

(adapted from www.NFPA.org) The October, 2005 Newsletter was devoted to disaster preparedness due to the recent hurricanes in the Southwest, the November Newsletter will address fire safety. Fire safety topics are typically covered in October.

Remember that a candle is an open flame. It can easily ignite any combustible nearby. **Facts and figures**

- During 2002, an estimated 18,000 home fires started by candles were reported to public fire departments. These fires resulted in an estimated 130 civilian deaths, 1,350 civilian injuries and an estimated direct property loss of \$333 million. Homes include one- and two-family dwellings, apartments and manufactured housing.
- The estimated number of home candle fires was unchanged from 2001 to 2002. For the first time since 1991, the number of home candle fires has stabilized rather than increasing.
- Candle fires accounted for an estimated 5% of all reported home fires.
- Two-fifths (40%) of the home candle fires started in the bedroom, resulting in 30% of the associated civilian deaths.
- Reported home candle fires have more than tripled since the low of 5,500 in 1990.
- December had almost twice the number of home candle fires of an average month.
- Half (50%) of home candle fires occurred when some form of combustible material was left or came too close to the candle; Eighteen percent occurred after candles were left unattended, abandoned or inadequately controlled; Five percent were started by people (usually children) playing with the candle.
- Falling asleep was a factor in 12% of home candle fires and 25% of the home candle fire deaths.
- Christmas Day was the peak day of the year for home candle fires in 1999-2002. New Year's Day and Christmas Eve tied for second.

Source: National estimates based on NFIRS and NFPA survey.

### Safety tips:

- Extinguish all candles when leaving the room or going to sleep.
- Keep candles away from items that can catch fire, like clothing, books and curtains.
- 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.
- Keep candles and all open flames away from flammable liquids.
- Keep candle wicks trimmed to one-quarter inch and extinguish taper and pillar candles when they get to within two inches of the holder. Votives and containers should be extinguished before the last half-inch of wax starts to melt.
- During power outages, avoid carrying a lit candle. Use flashlights.

### 2005 Dates:

#### January:

Plan Your Safety Training Now!  
Call Cambridge For Ideas!  
312-381-8208

#### February:

Child Passenger Safety Week

#### March:

Poison Prevention Week  
Workplace Eye Safety Month  
Save Your Vision Month

#### April:

Sports Eye Safety Month  
Intl Building Safety Week  
Work Zone Aware. Week  
Playground Safety Week

#### May:

Clean Air Month  
Melanoma Awareness Month  
Electrical Safety Month  
National EMS Week  
Poison Prevention Week

#### June:

National Safety Month

#### July:

EYE INJURY PREV. MONTH

#### August:

Prepare Your Winter Safety  
Training!

#### September:

Farm Safety/Health Week

#### October:

Nat. Fire Prevention Week  
Drive Safely Work Week  
Radon Action Week

#### November:

Take advantage of the weather  
and do your classroom training!

#### December:

"3D Month" - National Drunk &  
Drugged Driving Prevention  
Month

# Home Fire Planning and Practice

(adapted from www.NFPA.org)

Developing and practicing a home fire escape plan that everyone understands can mean the difference between life and death. Fire can grow and spread through your home very quickly. It's important that you be prepared to react as soon as the smoke alarm sounds.

### Facts & figures

- Only one-fifth to one-fourth of households (23%) have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan to ensure they could escape quickly and safely.
- In 2004, there were an estimated 395,500 reported home structure fires and 3,190 associated civilian deaths in the United States.
- One-third of American households who made an estimate thought they would have at least 6 minutes before a fire in their home would become life-threatening. The time available is often less. And only 8% said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm would be to get out!

Source: Harris Interactive Survey, Fall 2004, conducted for NFPA, and NFPA's Fire Loss in the United States During 2004 - Abridged report

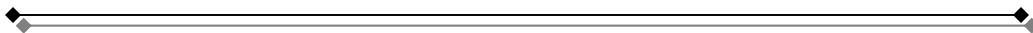


## Putting Together Your Escape Plan

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These tips can help you put together – and practice – an effective home fire escape plan.

- Pull together everyone in your household and make a plan. Draw a floor plan of your home showing two ways out of each room, including windows. Don't forget to mark the location of each smoke alarm.
- Test all smoke alarms monthly to ensure that they work. Replace batteries as needed.
- Make sure that everyone understands the escape plan and recognizes the sound of the smoke alarm. Are the escape routes clear? Can doors and windows be opened easily?
- If windows or doors in your home have security bars, make sure that the bars have quick-release mechanisms on the inside so that they can be opened immediately in an emergency. Quick-release mechanisms won't compromise your security – they increase your chance of safely escaping a home fire.
- Practice the escape plan at least twice a year, making sure that everyone is involved – from kids to grandparents. Allow children to master fire escape planning and practice before holding a fire drill at night when they are sleeping. The objective is to practice, not to frighten, so telling children there will be a drill before they go to bed can be as effective as a surprise drill. If children or others do not readily waken to the sound of the smoke alarm, or if there are infants or family members with mobility limitations, make sure that someone is assigned to assist them in fire drill and in the event of an emergency.
- Agree on an outside meeting place where everyone can meet after they've escaped. Remember to get out first, then call for help. Never go back inside until the fire department gives the OK.
- Have everyone memorize the emergency phone number of the fire department. That way any member of the household can call from a cellular phone or a neighbor's home.
- Be fully prepared for a real fire: when a smoke alarm sounds, get out immediately. And once you're out, stay out – leave the firefighting to the professionals!
- If you live in an apartment building, make sure that you're familiar with the building's evacuation plan. In case of a fire, use the stairs, never the elevator.
- Tell guests or visitors to your home about your family's fire escape plan. When visiting other people's homes, ask about their escape plan. If they don't have a plan in place, offer to help them make one.



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# Safety Resource Center

### It's Good To Know:

#### Smoke Detectors:

Every home needs smoke detectors – even yours!

Smoke detectors are the residential fire safety success story of the past quarter century. Smoke alarm technology has been around since the 1960s. But the single-station, battery-powered smoke alarm we know today became available to consumers in the 1970s, and since then, the home fire death rate has been reduced by half.

Most states have laws requiring them in residential dwellings.

### It's Good To Know:

#### Fire Sprinkler Systems:

##### The Facts

- Sprinklers typically reduce chances of dying in a fire and the average property loss by one-half to two-thirds compared to where sprinklers are not present.
- NFPA has no record of a fire killing more than two people in a completely sprinklered public assembly, educational, institutional or residential building where the system was working properly.
- In 1999, 34% of public assembly properties where fires occurred in the U.S. were equipped with sprinklers, compared with 7% of residential properties.
- In 2002, 79% of fires occurred in the home, resulting in 2,670 fire deaths.

### It's Good To Know:

#### Get The Fire Facts!

**The most recognized fire safety organization in the world is the NFPA.**

Contact:

[www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)