



Fire Prevention Canada

Working with the private and public sectors to achieve
fire safety through education

ONE OF THE MAJOR CAUSES OF HOME FIRES, ESPECIALLY DURING THE WINTER AND CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

Candles provide great warmth and ambiance to any home. It is easy to forget that such a calming artifact is an open flame that can reach 1,400 °C. Most candle fires begin in the bedroom – with a mattress or bedding cited as the first item to ignite – except during the holidays, when more people use candles precariously too close to decorations. Furniture and plastics are also cited as the first items in the home to catch fire from a lit candle.

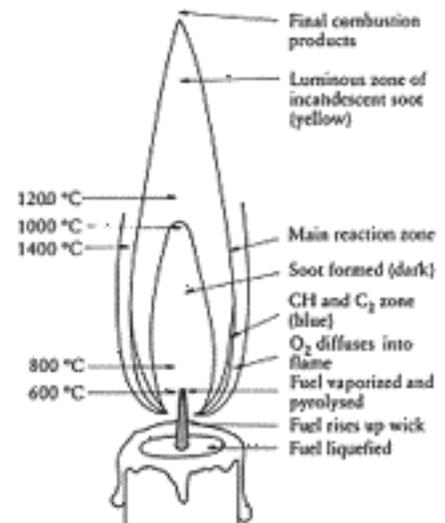
Statistics reveal that the most common causes of fire are

- Leaving candles unattended.
- Falling asleep while a candle is lit.
- Using candles for light.
- Candles located too close to burnable objects.
- Candles knocked over by children, pets or sudden drafts.

Safety Tips

- Extinguish candles when leaving the room or going to sleep.
- Keep lit candles away from items that can catch fire such as toys, clothing, books, curtains, Christmas trees and paper decorations.
- Place candles in sturdy, burn-resistant containers that won't tip over and are big enough to collect dripping wax.
- Don't place lit candles near windows, where blinds or curtains may close or blow over them.
- Don't use candles in high traffic areas where children or pets could knock them over.
- Never let candles burn out completely. Extinguish them when they get to within two inches of the holder or decorative material.
- Never leave children or pets alone in a room with lit candles.
- Do not allow older children to light candles in their bedrooms. A forgotten candle or an accident is all it takes to start a fire.
- During power outages, exercise caution when using candles as a light source. Many destructive fires start when potential fire hazards go unnoticed in the dark.
- Never use a candle for light when fuelling equipment such as a camp fuel heater or lantern.

How hot is a candle flame?



Safety Tips (Cont'd)

- Keep candle wicks short at all times. Trim the wick to one-quarter inch (6.4 mm).
- Be wary of buying novelty candles. Avoid candles surrounded by flammable paint, paper, dried flowers, or breakable/meltable containers.
- Extinguish taper and pillar candles when they burn to within two inches of the holder, and container candles before the last half-inch of wax begins to melt.
- When buying or using novelty candles, try to determine if they pose a potential fire hazard (if they contain a combustible component for instance). If they do, or if you suspect that they might, inform your local fire department.
- Use extreme caution when carrying a lit candle, holding it well away from your clothes and any combustibles that may be along your path.

The Law

- There are no legal standards or regulations for candles, including their make, design, safety features, location or use.
- Candles are not tested by a testing agency for safety before they are put on the market for you to buy.