

Candles

During 2005, an estimated 15,600 home structure fires started by candles were reported to local fire departments. These fires resulted in an estimated 150 civilian deaths, 1,270 civilian injuries and an estimated direct property loss of \$539 million. Homes include dwellings, duplexes, manufactured housing and apartments.



Facts and figures

- Although home candle fires fell 8% from 2004 to 2005, more than twice as many were reported in 2005 as in 1990.
 - Candle fires accounted for an estimated 4% of all reported home fires in 2005.
 - Thirty-eight percent (38%) of home candle fires started in the bedroom, resulting in 41% of the associated civilian deaths.
 - December is the peak time of year for home candle fires. In December, 13% of home candle fires began with decorations compared to 4% the rest of the year.
 - More than half of all candle fires started when something that could burn, such as furniture, mattresses or bedding, curtains, or decorations, was too close to the candle.
 - Falling asleep was a factor in 12% of home candle fires and 26% of the associated deaths.
 - The top five days for home candle fires were Christmas, Christmas Eve, New Year's Day, New Year's Eve, and Halloween.
- ▶ Keep candles at least 12 inches from anything that can burn.
 - ▶ Use sturdy, safe candleholders.
 - ▶ Never leave a burning candle unattended. Extinguish candles when you leave a room.
 - ▶ Be careful not to splatter wax when extinguishing a candle.
 - ▶ Avoid using candles in bedrooms and sleeping areas.
 - ▶ Always use a flashlight, not a candle, for emergency lighting.
 - ▶ Consider using battery-operated flameless candles.