



## ***Candle Safety***

### **More And More Candles**

The use of candles is rapidly gaining popularity. Candle fires are also on the rise. In Ontario, they are the fifth leading cause of preventable fires. And while other causes of fires, such as cooking or heating are declining, the number of candle fires is on the rise. London firefighters are responding to an increasing number of blazes caused as a result of candles that are either unsafe or unattended.

### **Lower The Risk**

Candle fires generally don't happen when people use them to accompany a meal. That's because they are usually attended during mealtime. Candle fires do happen in places like bedrooms and bathrooms where people use them as mood enhancers. Unfortunately, people can fall asleep with a candle still burning or leave the room without snuffing out the flame. Candles should NEVER be left burning unattended!

Candle use in bedrooms is discouraged. Almost half of all candle fires start in the bedroom. If you must use candles in your bedroom, make sure they are not close to flammable articles such as bedding, curtains, blinds, piles of clothing, magazines and books or upholstered furniture. A good rule of thumb to follow is to keep candles at least a meter from anything that can burn. Avoid putting candles anywhere near windows. Curtains might be blown into a candle flame. And a breeze can fan the flames if a fire should occur.

### **How To Use Candles Safely**

Check to make sure that your candle holders are appropriate.

- They should be sturdy.
- They shouldn't be tipped over easily.
- They must be made of a material that doesn't burn.
- They should be big enough to catch any dripping wax.
- Your candle holders should not be placed amid clutter or near the edge of furniture where children might knock them over.
- Candle wicks should be clipped to a quarter inch before they are lit.

### **If The Power Goes Out**

Many people keep candles on hand for power outages. Flashlights and battery powered lamps are a better idea. Never carry lit candles. It's too easy to drop them.

### **Home For The Holidays**

December and early January is the most likely time for candle fires to start. That's because people associate candles with the holiday season. Fires can start when candles are placed too close to presents, decorations and Christmas trees.