

# Candle Safety Tips

---

Candles are available in nearly every size, shape, color and aroma one could think of. The candle industry has had a steady growth rate of about 10-15% annually, and is now in the ball park of a \$2.3 billion dollar industry.

7 out of 10 homes use candles--especially around the holidays and when people have company over.

Many people enjoy the ambience of the flickering candle, but when used incorrectly or left unattended, a candle can get become a weapon to burn down an entire house.

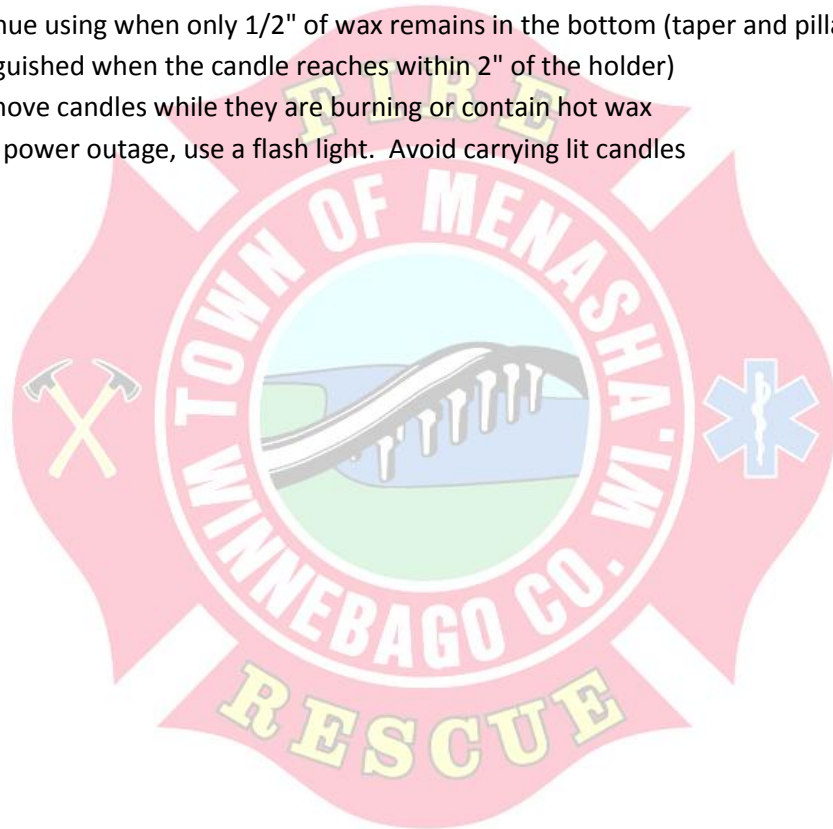
## *FACTS & FIGURES:*

- ✚ Between 1999-2002, Christmas Day was the peak day of the year for candle related fires. New Year's a Day and Christmas Eve tied for second
- ✚ During 2002, an estimated 18,000 home fires (including single & multi-family dwellings, apartments and manufactured homes) started by candles were reported to public fire departments. Damage resulting from said fires resulted in \$333 million in estimated property loss, 130 deaths and 1,350 injuries
- ✚ Candle fires have increased every year since 1991
- ✚ Candle fires accounted for about 5% of all reported home fires
- ✚ 40% of the home fires where candles were believed to be the ignition source, started in the bedroom resulting in 30% of the associated deaths.
- ✚ December has almost twice the number of home candle fires on average as compared to any other month
- ✚ 50% of the fires were caused by combustibles being left too close to the candle
- ✚ 18% of the fires were from unattended (abandoned, or inadequately controlled) candles
- ✚ 5% of the fires were from people (usually children) playing with candles

## *MINIMIZE YOUR RISK--SAFETY TIPS:*

- ✚ Follow the instructions printed on the label by the manufacturer
- ✚ Trim candle wicks to a height of 5-7mm before lighting the candle. Trim them again every 2-3 hours to prevent high flames
- ✚ Take extra care if you are burning candles with more than one wick. Avoid buying candles with multiple wicks that are close together
- ✚ Use well ventilated candle holders that are sturdy and will not tip over. Avoid wooden or plastic holders, as these are fire hazards. Use caution with glass candle holders as they can break if they get too hot
- ✚ Never drop objects (such as matches) into candles
- ✚ Keep burning candles away from combustible materials (e.g., draperies, decorations, clothing). If your clothing catches on fire, "STOP, DROP & ROLL"

- # Keep burning candles out of reach of children and pets
- # Do not leave candles burning in a room if you leave
- # Be sure to extinguish all candles before going to sleep or taking a nap
- # Do not burn candles that have lead wicks
- # Avoid using decorative oil lamps with liquid fuel if you have children under the age of 5 in your household. If you do have this type of lamp, keep the fuel locked up and out of children's/pets reach.
- # Teach your children to be careful around open flames and make sure they understand that candles are not something to play with, eat or drink.
- # Keep candles out of drafts
- # Discontinue using if any cracks appear in the glass
- # Discontinue using when only 1/2" of wax remains in the bottom (taper and pillar candles should be extinguished when the candle reaches within 2" of the holder)
- # Do not move candles while they are burning or contain hot wax
- # During a power outage, use a flash light. Avoid carrying lit candles



*Town of Menasha Fire Department  
Public Education: Our first line of defense*