

## Protect your home and family from cooking fires

Each year in North America, more than 100,000 home fires start in the kitchen, killing hundreds of people and injuring thousands. Most of these fires can be prevented.

### Tips to prevent cooking fires:

- **Never leave cooking unattended** - Two out of five deaths in home cooking fires occur because the cooking was unattended.
- **Keep cooking area clean** - Always wipe appliances and surfaces after cooking to prevent grease buildup.
- **Do not store flammable objects near the stove** - Curtains, pot holders, dish towels and food packaging can easily catch fire.
- **Always turn pot handles toward the center of the stove** - Turning handles inward can prevent pots from being knocked off the stove or pulled down by small children.
- **Wear short or close-fitting sleeves when cooking** - Fires can occur when clothing comes in contact with stovetop burners.
- **Heat cooking oil slowly** - Heating oil too quickly can easily start a fire. Never leave hot oil unattended.
- **Teach children safe cooking** - Young children should be kept at least 3 feet (1 meter) away from the stove while older family members are cooking. Older children should cook only with permission and under the supervision of an adult.

### What to do if a cooking fire starts:

- **Put a lid on it** - If a pan catches fire, carefully slide a lid over the pan and turn off the stove burner. Leave the lid on until completely cool.
- **Keep oven or microwave door shut if fire starts** - Turn off the heat. If flames do not go out immediately, call the fire department.
- **Know how to use a fire extinguisher** - Not all fire extinguishers are alike. They are designed for specific types of fire. Make sure you have a clear escape route and the fire department has been called before attempting to extinguish a small fire.
- **Water and grease don't mix** - Never pour water on a grease fire. Water causes grease fires to spread.

# Candles and Fire Safety

Decorative and fragranced candles may be an attractive addition to your home décor, but if used improperly, they can be a serious fire hazard. According to the National Fire Protection Association Journal article, "Candle Fires on the Rise", residential fires caused by candles have more than doubled over the past decade. In addition to being a fire hazard, improperly used candles can generate a significant amount of soot. This soot can damage the walls, floors and ceilings of your home as well as your personal belongings.

According to a 2001 pilot study of candle fires by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), by far, most candle fires were caused by combustibles being too close to the candle. The next most common cause of candle fires was due to the candle falling over or being knocked over by wind, doors, children or pets.

## Safety Tips

- Keep candles a minimum of 1 foot, in all directions, from flammable and combustible items such as curtains or bedding. Make sure curtains cannot be blown over the candle by wind.
- Place candles on secure furniture and out of the reach of children and pets.
- Only burn candles while under constant adult supervision.
- Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children.
- Trim wicks prior to each use to within ¼-inch from the top of the candle.
- Extinguish the flame if it burns too close to the container side.
- Place burning candles away from drafts and vents.
- Do not allow candles to burn down to the bottom of their container. Stick candles should not be allowed to burn down below 2 inches from their holder.
- Extinguish all candles before leaving the house or when going to bed.
- Avoid burning candles for more than four hours at a time.
- Avoid walking while holding a burning candle. Do not move a glass container when the wax is liquid.
- Use a flashlight rather than a candle during power outages.
- Do not use a candle for light when fueling equipment such as a kerosene heater or lantern as the flame may ignite the fuel vapors.
- Secure candles in holders made of glass, ceramic, metal or other noncombustible material.
- Avoid using candles that have combustible materials embedded in them.