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Department of Fire, EMS & Emergency Management

MEDIA RELEASE

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HOLIDAY SEASON, CANDLES, FIRE SEASON

Candles used during our holiday celebrations can be a beautiful way to express the symbolism and significance of an observance. However, as we enter the holiday season, we should remember that candles cause fires. According to NFPA's 2007 Home Candle Fire report, an average of 16,000 home structure fires per year started by candles were reported to local fire departments from 2002 to 2005, with associated losses of 160 deaths, 1,490 injuries, and \$486 million in property damage per year. December is the peak time of the year for candle fires. Christmas Day being the peak day of the year for home candle fires in 2000-2004.

Fires can be prevented. A few easy steps can save your life!

- Never leave a lit candle unattended.
- Keep candles out of reach of children and pets.
- Keep lit candles away from bedding, curtains, decorations, and anything that can burn.
- Put candles in sturdy metal, glass, or ceramic holders.
- Place candles where they cannot tip over.
- Blow out candles after use and before going to bed.
- If the power goes out, avoid carrying a lit candle. Use a flashlight instead.

In addition, check with the Consumer Product Safety Commission to see if your candle has been recalled because of safety concerns or causing fires. In 2008 there were 10 different candle products recalled because of a potential fire hazard. You can check on a product, report an unsafe product, or gain information by visiting Consumer Product Safety Commission web site.

Below is the current list of candle products that have been recalled because of fire hazard in 2008. Visit the Consumer Product Safety Commission for more details and product description or photos.

- Candela Recalls Candles Due to Fire and Burn Hazards; Sold Exclusively at Anthropologie
- Ghost Tealight Holders Recalled by Trade Associates Group and Crate & Barrel Due to Fire and Burn Hazard
- Additional Incidents Prompt Re-Announcement of Recall of Gel Candles Due to Fire Hazard
- The Home Depot Recalls Candle Holders Due to Fire Hazard
- Wal-Mart Recalls Candle Holders Due to Fire and Laceration Hazards
- Pier 1 Imports Recalls Tealight Candle Holders Due to Fire Hazard
- Christmas Tree Shops Recalls Tea Light Candles Due to Fire Hazard
- Nordstrom Recalls Taper and Votive Candles Due To Fire Hazard
- Pottery Barn Recalls Decorative Candles Due to Fire Hazard
- The Wick & Petal Co. Recalls Candles Due to Fire Hazard

The Statewide Fire Prevention Code further makes it a violation to use candles in certain occupancies. These include buildings used for assembly, except for religious purposes. They are also prohibited in schools and dormitories. In addition, candles cannot be located on or near decorative or similar combustible materials. For more information about the requirements, please contact your local Fire Official.

Information provided by the National Fire Protection Agency at www.nfpa.org, Fire Safety at www.FireSafety.gov, and Consumer Product Safety Commission at www.cpsc.gov.