

The following is a joint news release from the National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM) and the National Candle Association that was sent out on PR Newswire on November 3, 2010.

Be Careful With Candles During Power Outages

Tips for Fire Safety When the Lights Go Out

The U.S. candle industry and state fire marshals are urging consumers to exercise caution if using candles during a power outage. An estimated 20 percent of candle fires involving fatalities occur during the loss of electrical power.

Although flashlights and battery-powered lamps are safe sources of light during a power failure, candles are often a reliable back-up source of light during lengthy power outages or when a household flashlight is not available.

To protect your family and home, the National Candle Association and National Association of State Fire Marshals recommend the following precautions if you choose to use candles when the lights go out:

- **Pillar candles and container candles are a better choice during a power outage than taper candles.** Broader based candles are less likely to be accidentally knocked over. When possible, candles should be enclosed within glass globes for added protection from burns or fire.
- **Place candles on a stable surface in a fire resistant holder that is 12 inches away from anything flammable.** For added safety when the lights go out, a candle in its holder may be placed on a metal cookie sheet, frying pan or ceramic dinner plate.
- **Avoid moving a burning candle during a power outage if possible.** It is easy to trip in the dark or brush against something flammable. Container candles may be too hot to handle, causing you to drop the container which could start a fire.
- **Never leave a burning candle unattended.** Try to restrict people and candles to one room in the house so the location of family members and candle flames always can be accounted for. Extinguish candles upon leaving a room.
- **Make sure the candles are well out of the reach of children and pets.** Young children are especially apt to bump into things when a room is unfamiliarly dark.
- **Don't use candles to search for something in a closet or small confined space** where clothes, papers or other combustibles could accidentally ignite.
- **Extinguish all candles before going to bed.** Never use a candle as a nightlight.
- **Extinguish candles safely.** Extinguish the candle by cupping your hand behind the candle flame before blowing it out – or, better yet, snuff out the flame with a metal candle snuffer. A spark or ember, if blown from the candle, could ignite combustibles nearby.