



RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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CANDLES USED AS EMERGENCY LIGHTING

With the loss of electricity in many communities in Rhode Island citizens have turned to the use of candles as emergency lighting. **Unfortunately, this practice has already resulted in multiple house fires in our state.** Flashlights and other lights generated by batteries are much safer light sources than candles. Keep working flashlights on hand. Candles used as emergency lighting is not recommended, but if as a last resort you chose to use them, please consider the following information.

- Nearly two-fifths of home candle fires started in the bedroom.
- More than half of all candle fires start when things that can burn are too close to the candle, such as; furniture, mattresses or bedding, curtains, or decorations..
- Blow out all candles when you leave the room or go to bed. Avoid the use of candles in the bedroom and other areas where people may fall asleep.
- Think of using flameless candles in your home. They look and smell like real candles.

IF YOU DO BURN CANDLES, make sure that you...

- Use candle holders that are sturdy, and won't tip over easily.
- Put candles holders on a sturdy, uncluttered surface and away from open windows.
- Light candles carefully. Keep your hair and any loose clothing away from the flame.
- Don't burn a candle all the way down – put it out before it gets too close to the holder or container.
- Never use a candle if oxygen is used in the home.

POWER OUTAGES ARE SPECIAL SITUATIONS

- Avoid carrying a lit candle. When you carry a candle, you are carrying something that could start a fire. If you need to look for something in a closet or confined area, use a flashlight or wait.
- Never use a candle for light when checking pilot lights or fueling equipment such as a kerosene heater or lantern. The flame may ignite the fumes.
- Extinguish all candles when leaving the home or when going to sleep.
- Never leave a child alone in a room with a burning candle. Keep matches, lighters and other heat sources high and out of children's reach.
- Keep pets away from lit candles
