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## **As Hurricane Activity Increases, So Does the Importance of Fire Safety** *Tips for Safe Candle Use When the Lights Go Out*

**WASHINGTON, DC**—Not only has hurricane season arrived, but severe weather all across the country can happen during the summer months, which often leads to the temporary loss of electric power. The U.S. candle industry and state fire marshals advise consumers to take critical safety measures if using candles or other open flames during a power outage.

An estimated 26% of fatal candle fires occur during the loss of electrical power. While flashlights and battery-powered lamps often provide a safe source of light during these power outages, candles are frequently utilized as a back-up source of light during lengthy periods.

Power outages as a result of hurricanes and severe weather cannot be avoided, but accidental candle fires can. The National Candle Association and the National Association of State Fire Marshals recommend the following precautions to keep your family and home safe:

- **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 at least 12 inches away from anything flammable, including upholstered furniture and window drapes.** For added safety when the lights go out, a candle in its holder may be placed on a stable, nonflammable surface, such as 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. Always 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.** Many items in closets like clothes, papers or boxes are flammable and could accidentally ignite.
- **Never fall asleep while candles are burning.** Extinguish all candles before going to bed, and 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.

To learn more about candle fire safety, visit <http://candles.org/fire-safety-candles/>.

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*National Candle Association (NCA) is the trade association representing U.S. candle manufacturers and their suppliers. It is widely recognized as the leading technical authority on candle manufacturing, science and safety. Visit [www.candles.org](http://www.candles.org).*

*National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM) members are the senior state-level fire safety officials in the U.S., including the District of Columbia. NASFM's primary mission is to protect human life, property and the environment from fire and related hazards. Visit [www.firemarshals.org](http://www.firemarshals.org).*