



FACT SHEET » RESEARCH

United States Home Candle Fires

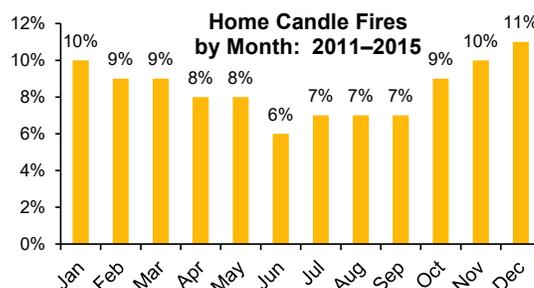
In 2011–2015, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 8,690 home¹ structure fires started by candles, per year. These fires caused an annual average of 82 civilian fire deaths, 800 civilian fire injuries, and \$295 million in direct property damage.

Overall, candles caused 2% of reported home fires, 3% of the home fire deaths, 7% of the home fire injuries, and 4% of the direct property damage in reported home fires during this period.

On average, 24 home candle fires were reported per day.

Candle fires are more common around the winter holidays

- ▶ Candle fires peaked in December (11%), and January and November ranked second, each with 10% of home candle fires.
- ▶ The top three days for home candle fires were Christmas, New Year's, and New Year's Eve.



Causes and Circumstances of Home Candle Fires

Three of every five (59%) candle fires started when something that could burn, such as furniture, mattresses or bedding, curtains, or decorations, was too close to the candle.

In 16% of the fires, the candles were unattended or abandoned.

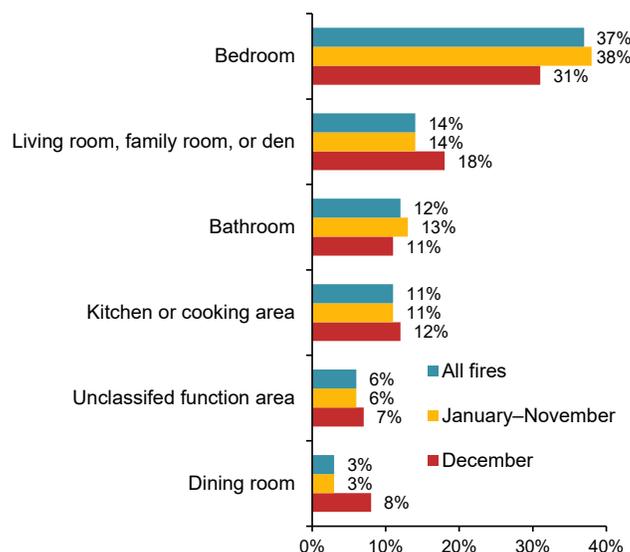
Sleep was a factor in 11% of the fires and 21% of the candle fire deaths.

More than one-third (37%) of home candle fires began in the bedroom, although the National Candle Association found that only 13% of candle users most often burn candles in the bedroom.

Although bedrooms are still the most common area of origin, the pattern is somewhat different when candles become part of holiday decorating and celebrations.

- ▶ 18% of December candle fires started in the living room, family room, or den, and 8% started in the dining room compared to 14% and 3% for those areas during the rest of the year.
- ▶ 12% of December candle fires began with decorations. Only 4% of candle fires from January to November began with decorations.

Home Candle Fires by Leading Areas of Origin and Time of Year: 2011–2015



¹Homes include one- and two-family homes, manufactured housing, and apartments or other multi-family housing regardless of ownership.

Source: NFPA Research: www.nfpa.org/research
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