

Dear Parent/Guardian:

All too often, fatal fires caused by candles make headlines. In Las Vegas, September 2005, Clark County Fire Department responded to a fire at an apartment complex. The cause of fire was determined to be an unattended candle. The blaze caused \$250,000 in damage to eight units. August 2005, a candle left burning in a bedroom started a townhouse on fire that caused \$25,000 worth of property damage. No one was injured in these two fires but all too often lives are lost due to careless use of candles.

In 2001, home candle fires killed 190 people and caused more than a quarter million dollars in property damage in the United States, according to the latest data from the nonprofit National Fire Protection Association. That data also revealed that candles started more reported home fires in 2001 than at any point since 1980, the first year of available data.

Tragedies like these happen every day and Las Vegas is no exception.

This loss of life and property is staggering, but there is much that you can do to protect yourself and your loved ones. That's why the Clark County Fire Department, along with thousands of other fire departments across North America, is participating in National Fire Prevention Week, October 9th through 15th, 2005. The theme for this year is, "***Use Candles with Care: When you go out, blow out!***"

Used safely, candles can fill our homes with fragrance and create a calming and welcoming mood. They add glow to the holidays and are an important part of religious observances. But what you may not realize is how easily fire can start when a candle is left unattended or left burning while someone sleeps.

The 2005 National Fire Prevention Week advice is simple:

- Use candles safely- never leave a candle unattended, place candles on stable furniture and in sturdy holders that will catch dripping wax and keep candles away from things that can catch on fire.
- Make sure you have working smoke alarms on all levels of your home, especially near all sleeping areas.
- Test your smoke alarms at least once a month and replace batteries at least once a year.
- Sit down with family members and draw up a fire escape plan. Use the enclosed diagram to help you.
- Practice this home escape plan by holding a fire drill at least twice a year. Make sure that there are two ways (window or door) out of every room. Designate a family meeting place in the front of your house away from harm.
- Teach everyone in your household that once they are out they must stay out. Do **not** be tempted to go back inside the building for any reason.

Please work with your child to complete the attached homework assignment and draw your "Home Escape Plan". It is very important for the Clark County Fire Department to receive the completed homework assignment. The completed homework assignment will provide us with the positive feedback needed to ensure that we have made a difference to your family through our program. When the homework is finished, please have your child return it to the teacher.

By following the above fire safety tips and completing the homework assignment, you will have prepared your family to know what to do in case of fire. Thank you for your time and assistance to the Clark County Fire Department.

Sincerely Yours,

La Mar Lucas  
Public Education Officer