



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 12/11/08

CONTACT: Wendy Forbes (303) 252-3017
wforbes@northmetrofire.org

MAKING “SCENTS” FOR THE HOLIDAY

Northglenn/Broomfield, CO— Break out the decorations for the holidays! But, this year, North Metro wants residents to swap out traditional candles with some great new options. Candle fires have doubled in frequency since the 1990’s. One home candle fire is reported every 34 minutes in the United States with December being the peak month every year (National Fire Protection Association).

“While candles have great aroma and add to a holiday atmosphere, an open flame in your home does present a hazard, explains Wendy Forbes, Public Information Officer for North Metro Fire Rescue District. “But if you want to keep the tradition in your home—there are some great new options for you to still enjoy the scent or glow of a candle.”

There are now worry free, flameless candles sold that are battery operated. They come as a decorative votive holder and even flicker like real candles. Unless you look inside the holder—no one would know that they weren’t real! In addition, there are wax potpourri or candle warmers. These items are also run by electricity and have no flame. They warm a piece of wax releasing the aroma just like a real candle.

By removing an open flame, you can help avoid the top reason of how candle fires begin. More than half of all candle fires start when something that could burn, such as furniture, holiday decorations, or curtains, was too close to the candle’s open flame.

-more-

If you are not convinced to try these two great alternatives to traditional candles, then please accept the responsibility of burning candles safely in your home. Here is what you can do to reduce your household’s risk:

- NEVER burn candles in your bedroom.
- Extinguish all candles when leaving the room or going to sleep.
- Keep candles one foot away from things that can catch fire—books, curtains, clothing, decorations, etc.
- Use candle holders with a wide base that can catch all the dripping wax. Do not place decorative items around candles made from materials that can burn (this includes plastic or fabric rings).
- Extinguish and throw out taper and pillar candles when they get to within two inches of the holder.
- Extinguish and throw out votives before the last half-inch of wax starts to melt.

Remember if you have pets or children in your home it is important to pay extra caution with your candles. Since the candles may be fascinating to children, keep a watchful eye when they are around them and do not let them play with lighting or extinguishing candles. Handling fire should be taught to children—not used as a game.

In addition, a popular trend has been to allow pre-teen and teenage children to use candles in their bedrooms. This is the most dangerous room in a home to burn candles due to the type of combustibles found in a bedroom as well as the human factor. The human factor is that falling asleep while a candle is in use, is a reality. The national statistics confirm this unfortunate outcome— in 2005, thirty-eight percent of home candle fires started in the bedroom, resulting in 41% of the associated civilian deaths (NFPA). This outcome is one we can easily avoid by simply making it a household rule that no-one has candles (even as decorations) in their rooms.

Consider your options this year as you celebrate—and make “scents” for the holidays!

###

About North Metro Fire Rescue District

North Metro Fire Rescue is dedicated to your quality care. North Metro Fire Rescue provides fire protection, emergency medical services, hazardous materials response and rescue services to our community. Formed in 1946, the district now covers 63 square miles with a population of approximately 103,000 people including the City and County of Broomfield, the City of Northglenn and unincorporated areas of Boulder, Adams and Jefferson Counties.