



Washington State Patrol • State Fire Marshal Chad Cross

*** For Immediate Release***

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Pet Fire Safety

Olympia- Every year, approximately 750 accidental home fires are caused by pets or wild animals, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). These fires are often the result of pets interacting with everyday household items, such as cooking equipment, fireplaces, space heaters, lamps, electrical wiring, and candles.

In 2024, there were 1,173 fires caused by open flames such as candles in Washington state. While not all of these fires were caused by animals, it is a stark reminder of the risks they bring into our homes and urges us all to exercise caution lighting candles in homes where our furry friends are present. A pet's simple curiosity can lead to dangerous situations, putting both animals and homeowners at risk.

The State Fire Marshal's Office recommends these key pet fire safety tips:

- **Keep Pets Away from Cooking Equipment:** pets are naturally curious and may interfere with kitchen appliances. Keep pets safely away from cooking areas, countertops, and stovetops.
- **Protect Pets from Candles and Lamps:** never leave pets unsupervised near candles, lamps, or space heaters. A pet can easily knock over a candle or lamp, igniting a fire.
- **Use Fireplace Safety Screens:** always use a metal or heat-tempered glass screen on fireplaces and keep it securely in place to prevent pets from getting too close to the flames. It's also important to establish a "pet-free zone" of at least 3 feet around the fireplace to avoid burns or accidents.
- **Guard Your Fireplace Vents:** keep pets away from the outside vents of your chimney, which can get very hot. Glass doors and screens on fireplaces can stay dangerously hot for several hours after the fire has been extinguished, posing a burn risk to curious pets.
- **Use Flameless Candles:** battery-operated, flameless candles can provide the same ambiance as traditional candles without the risk of fire. These can be a safer alternative for pet owners.
- **Secure Electrical Cords:** many pets, especially puppies and kittens, are prone to chewing on electrical cords. Keep cords out of reach, and ensure they are in good condition to prevent pets from accidentally chewing through them and causing a fire hazard.

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