



**Fire Protection Standard 517A**

**USE OF CANDLES AND OPEN FLAME –  
PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES**

Date: August 1, 2009

Revision: October 6, 2011

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This standard has been developed pursuant to Chapter 3 of the California Fire Code as adopted by ordinance by the Southern Marin Fire Protection District. It is intended that this standard be used as a guide for the use of candles and open flames other than approved appliances and equipment in public assembly occupancies, and to establish reasonable fire and life safety measures.

I. Permits

- A. A Fire District permit is required to use candles, open flame devices or flaming foods or drinks in any public assembly occupancy. A permit application shall be completed and returned to the Fire District with the application fee for processing. Applications may be obtained by contacting the Fire District at (415) 388-8182.

II. Conditions of Permit

A. General

- 1. Candle holders shall be approved by the Fire Code Official prior to use.
- 2. Hand held candles are not permitted
- 3. A person shall not use or allow to be used any open flame or burning candles in such a manner as to create a fire or fire hazard.

B. Detailed Candle Holder Requirements

- 1. The diameter of the base must be at least one half the height of the candle or candle holder.
- 2. The base must support the light or lamp on the entire perimeter. The use of legs is not permitted unless the lamp is stable.
- 3. The flame must be completely enclosed. Any opening for air supply must not be more than 3/8" in diameter.
- 4. Any shade must be securely attached to the lamp
- 5. Any shade must be of fire resistive materials.
- 6. The candle holder must be securely attached to the base.



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7. The candle must be secured in the holder so that it will not easily separate from the holder if dropped.
8. The candle must be located in the holder so that there is minimum of two inches between the top of the flame and any combustible material that might be placed on top of the holder.
9. All materials, except the candle itself, shall be non-combustible.
10. A model must be submitted to the chief and approved by make and model number prior to use.

C. Candles used in connection with religious or ritualistic ceremonies

1. Candles used in churches, lodge halls and similar places shall be limited to areas out of the reach or way of the occupants using the area.
2. Candelabra with lighted candles shall be securely fastened in place so that they cannot tip over. They shall be located away from occupants using area and away from possible contact of drapes, curtains or other combustibles.
3. Candelabra shall be high enough that clothing cannot come in contact with flame.
4. Candles held in persons' hands are especially dangerous and shall not be permitted. Battery operated simulated candles are available and may be used in lieu of candles with an open flame.