



Candlelight Service & Vigil Safety Tips

You are planning a candlelight service or organizing a candlelight vigil to support a cause or honor a person.

Here are some safety tips from the Excelsior Fire District so your service or vigil will be safe.

Planning

If time allows consider using battery operated hand held candlelight or vigil candle.

Outdoor services and vigil planners should use caution and be aware of burning bans. Most burning bans do not include outdoor services or vigils, however bans are an indication of fire risk. Extra precautions should be taken during burning bans. Check with your local Fire Chief or Fire Marshal.

Open Flames/candles are not allowed in any sized tent, temporary structure, and most public buildings other than places of worship and event centers. Check with your local Fire Chief or Fire Marshal before you begin planning.

When planning your service or vigil beware of how long it will take the candles to burn down and plan accordingly. Once a candle is too short to hold safely the dripping wax can burn skin and the flame can burn hands and catch long sleeves on fire.

Incorporate the action of blowing out the candles into the conclusion of the service or vigil. This will help make sure the candles are blown out and people are not walking around with lit candles.

Prevent Fires and Burns

Small children shall not be allowed to hold the candles at any time.

Candle wicks should be trimmed to ¼ inch prior to lighting.

Designate people to keep an eye on participant's flames; if they see a candle that is burning low, they can ask the person to blow their candle out.

Hand held candles should not be passed from person to person when they are lit.

To prevent burns and to keep track of lighters designate certain people to light the candles.

Use stick lighters to light the candles. Do not use matches.

At the beginning of the service or vigil, instruct participants to keep a safe zone around their candles, especially if it is windy. To prevent clothing, hair, scarves, and other materials from catching on fire

they should pay attention the flames on their candles and keep a safe distance between the flames and other people.

If clothing catches on fire, people should not run they should “Stop, Drop and Roll.”

Have fire extinguishers available in case a fire occurs. Make sure the fire extinguishers are not expired and/or have a current inspection tag attached to them.

Candles should come with cups, bobeches, or similar drip protectors to prevent burns on the hands and from dripping wax.

Do not allow wax to drip on people, the ground, trees, or other surfaces.

Extinguishing the Candle Flames

Provide buckets of water and non-combustible pails or cans with tight fitting lids to collect the candles after the service or vigil.

Designate a person(s) to be by the collection area so they can make sure each candle is dipped in the bucket of water and placed in the proper non-combustible collection pail or can.

To transport or store the candles after the service or vigil make sure the non-combustible lid for the pail or can is in place.

Emergency Response

In the event of an emergency 9-1-1 should be called FIRST!

For outdoor service or vigils organizers and there volunteers/staff should know:

- a. Which city they are in
- b. Which street they are located on
- c. Cross streets if they apply
- d. The name of the park or trail where the service or vigil is taking place

At large service or vigils a person should be assigned to meet emergency responders as they arrive and escorts them to the patient (s). Officers from the Police Department, firefighters from the Fire District, and paramedics from the ambulance service will arrive at different times for medical emergencies.

Have a first-aid kit(s) on site stocked with items to specifically treat minor burns, minor injuries, or non-life threatening bee stings.

Aerial Luminaries

Be aware, sky lanterns, Chinese’s Lanterns, ceremony lanterns are not legal in Minnesota.

Keep in mind they go up as a lantern and come down as litter.