

CHARLESTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Marshal Division

Information Bulletin

Candlelight Vigil - Indoor



Candlelight vigils are an important part of religious and remembrance ceremonies. These activities are allowed by the International Fire Code as long as the appropriate safe guards are in place to protect the occupants and prevent an uncontrolled fire. The following are considered minimum safeguards for the event sponsor:

- 1) A responsible fire watch of not less than two adults must be established during the event. The fire watch may consist of trained fire service personnel or responsible adults who have been trained to use fire extinguishers. Fire watch personnel shall:
 - a) Survey and function all exits in the area prior to the event.
 - b) Ensure exits remain unlocked and unblocked during the event.
 - c) Keep aisles and exits clear and unobstructed.
 - d) Maintain a watch for uncontrolled fire or unsafe activities during the event.
 - e) Have in close proximity and ready to use two pressurized water extinguishers.
 - f) Be provided with at least one means of 911 communications (cell phone).
- 2) The facility must be adequately equipped throughout with fire extinguishers. Additionally, during the event, at least two pressurized water extinguisher will be available to the fire watch personnel.
- 3) Participants are allowed to carry hand-held candles. Hand-held candles shall not be passed from one person to another while lighted.
- 4) All hand-held candles must be provided with wax shields or other means to prevent hot wax from dripping onto or burning the attendant's hand.
- 5) The maximum occupant load/capacity shall not be exceeded. Patrons must be located in designated seating areas and at no time will aisles or exits be utilized for overflow attendance.
- 6) The City of Charleston Fire Department – Fire Marshal Division should be notified of the event. Notice should be given as soon as possible so that safety guidelines and questions can be addressed.

Please contact the Charleston Fire Department - Fire Marshal Division at (843)724-3429 with any additional questions or to schedule a review of the event.