

media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



Earth Hour candle warning

Friday, 27 March 2009

With thousands of South Australians expected to participate in Earth Hour on Saturday, 28 March, the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) is warning people to be mindful of fire safety.

The MFS supports the Earth Hour initiative and is encouraging people to prepare for a safe night ahead of lights being switched off for one hour.

District Officer, Allan Foster of the MFS Community Safety Department is warning people not to use their fuse box to turn lights off, as their smoke alarm(s) may also be disabled if back-up batteries have gone flat.

“The MFS recommends that people use torches instead of candles because they are a safer light source.

“A candle is an open flame. Left unattended, candles can easily cause a house fire,” Mr Foster says.

In particular, the MFS warns that children and candles or pets and candles can be a deadly mix.

“We would prefer that candles aren’t used if children or pets are present. But if you do, keep candles up high, out of reach and never leave a child or pet unattended in a room with a candle,” Mr Foster says.

If people choose to light candles, there are several safety tips to follow:

- Use candles only with constant adult supervision
- Do not use candles in places where they can be knocked over by children or pets
- Extinguish all candles when leaving a room or going to sleep
- Keep candles well away from items that can catch fire, such as clothing, books, paper and curtains
- Make sure candles are placed in sturdy holders that will not tip over and place on a secure piece of heat-resistant furniture. Candle holders must be non-combustible
- Keep the immediate area around a candle clear of all items
- Do not place lit candles in windows, where blinds or curtains can close over them
- Keep candles and all open flames away from flammable liquids.

For more information about **home fire safety** and **candle safety** visit the MFS website:

http://www.mfs.sa.gov.au/site/community_safety/home_fire_safety_information_sheets_domestic

For further information call the MFS media line on 8204 3770