



## NEWS RELEASE

Date: June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011  
Release Date: Immediately  
Contact: Public Information Officer, 503-441-9324 (pager)

### **(Burning candle causes bedroom fire)**

A candle left burning on a mattress in a child's bedroom caused a one alarm house fire in Beaverton this morning. Although most of the damage was confined to the bedroom, firefighters were further challenged by the task of searching the home for an occupant who was reportedly trying to extinguish the fire with a garden hose.

A resident of the home called 911 at 10:33 a.m. reporting a fire in an upstairs bedroom of the home at 7125 SW 175th Avenue in Beaverton. Firefighters from Stations 50, 66, 67 and 69 arrived within minutes and were advised that a male occupant of the home was inside trying to fight the fire. Firefighters asked the man to leave the home and then searched the house for other occupants as a team of firefighters pulled a hose line up the stairs to the search for the fire.

Firefighters located a burning mattress in a second floor bedroom and quickly extinguished it. The home was charged with smoke and firefighters worked to clear the smoke out of the house.

After interviewing the occupants, a TVF&R investigator has determined that the fire was caused by a candle that had been left burning on a mattress. The occupants became aware of the fire after hearing a smoke alarm sounding in the hallway outside of the room of origin. The smoke alarm in the bedroom where the fire started did not sound.

"Never leave a candle unattended, period." says TVF&R Public Information Officer Brian Barker, "Candles were involved in two fatal fires in TVF&R's service area in the past two years. Combine the danger of an unattended candle and a smoke alarm that's doesn't work, and you have a recipe for disaster. We're glad no one was hurt."

According to the Oregon State Fire Marshal's Office, in the five-year period from 2004 through 2008, there were 584 candle-related fires in Oregon resulting in 14 civilian deaths, 71 civilian injuries, 22 firefighter injuries and estimated property losses of nearly \$16 million.

TVF&R suggests these safety tips for using candles.

- Extinguish all candles when leaving the room or going to sleep.
- Keep candles away from combustibles such as clothing, curtains, decorations, holiday trees, or paper.

- Use candle holders that won't tip over easily, can catch dripping wax, and are made of materials that won't burn.

"While the occupant attempted to extinguish the fire with a garden hose, TVF&R advises that you never run back into a burning home.," TVF&R's Barker continues, "the occupant could have easily been overcome by the toxic smoke in the home and killed. Close the door to the burning room, leave the house, and leave the firefighting to us."

There is smoke damage throughout the second floor of the home. The Red Cross is helping the 5 occupants of the home find a place to stay while the damage is repaired.

