

# Common causes of fire: candles, surge protectors and space heaters

Decorating a table with a candle is a great idea, provided that the candle isn't part of a centerpiece that contains combustible materials. Before you light the candle in your centerpiece, remove the surrounding decorations and blow it out before you and your guests leave the room.

Don't mistake a power strip for a surge protector or you could find yourself replacing your appliances and electronic devices after a power surge. Surge protectors must be internally fused in order to do their job. Look for this feature and the UL (Underwriters Laboratories Inc.) label when purchasing them.

There's nothing like the warmth from a space heater when your toes are cold from shoveling. Despite their usefulness, space heaters can pose tripping and fire hazards. Keep power cords out of foot and pet traffic areas and position heaters at least three feet away from combustible materials like window treatments, bedding, clothing, furniture, magazines, or toys.