



Ritual fire safety in the home

It is important to keep you, your family, and your guests safe when you are conducting rituals at home. This guide aims to provide you with ways you can conduct important religious activities and reduce the risk of fire while doing so.

At Fire and Emergency New Zealand, we want to support you to continue to practice your religion and conduct rituals in New Zealand as safely as possible.

We are also here to help. If you do have or see a fire don't hesitate to call 111. Fire and Emergency New Zealand does not charge for our trucks attending an incident.

Havan kund fire safety

When you are using a havan kund at home, it is important to plan how and where you aim to use it. Below are some tips to help keep you safe.

Before lighting your havan kund

- Think about what room your havan kund is going to be in. Before placing it run through the following checklist:
 - How many people are going to be in the room?
 - What furniture is in the room?
 - Does the room have enough space in it for people to safely move around the havan kund? We recommend at least one metre of clear space around the havan kund.
 - Make sure the room you are lighting the havan kund in has sufficient ventilation.
- Make sure to use a havan kund stand and/or place a fire resistant board, tile or concrete block under your havan kund before using it. Make sure that whatever you are using underneath your havan kund is larger than havan kund itself.
- Create a plan for how you are going to move the havan kund outside. It is a good idea to clear a path and have a spot to place it well away from your house, trees, bushes or anything else that could catch fire.
- For added protection install heat alarms in the room that you will be using your havan kund in.
- Only use small pieces of kindling that do not exceed the perimeter of the kund. When adding more wood to the kund, assign one or two people to manage the fire.

When your havan kund is burning

Take the following steps to ensure you, your family and your guests are safe while your havan kund is lit.

- Maintain a safe space around the havan kund. We recommend at least one metre of space around the havan kund.
- Never leave the havan kund unattended. Make sure that while it is burning inside the house someone is always monitoring it.
- Always have an adult supervising young people while the havan kund is burning.

Following the ritual

Once you have completed the ritual with your havan kund take the following steps reduce the risk of an unwanted fire.

- If you are moving the havan kund outside, make sure your pathway is clear and the people carrying the havan kund know where you are putting it.
- Make sure the spot you plan to leave it in is flat, stable, away from any flammable materials and not too windy.
- Once the flame in your havan kund is completely out, completely cover the ashes with water and leave them for at least three days before throwing them in the rubbish.

Lighting diya

If you light diyas at home, it is important to think about the following things before you light them.

- The wick size – if you are planning on leaving home after you have lit the diya, use a smaller wick to make sure it doesn't burn too long.
- If you are leaving the house, always extinguish your diyas.
- If you are lighting a diya following the passing of a relative or family member, make sure it is in a closed diya. Remember check on it regularly and that it is not close to anything flammable.
- Always have a working smoke alarm in the room your diyas are being used in. A working smoke alarm will alert you if anything has gone wrong.