

## *Halloween Safety Tips*

With Halloween just around the corner, many people have already begun making plans to celebrate the event. Halloween is an exciting, fun-filled time for young people. Costumes, decorations, and candy are just a few of the memories the season brings to mind. Unfortunately, Halloween is also a time for increased accidents, injuries, and deaths.

Many Halloween-related accidents and injuries can be prevented if steps are taken to include *safety* in the mix. Here are some things you can do to help make this Halloween safe:

### *COSTUMES*

- When purchasing costumes, masks, beards, and wigs, make sure “Flame Resistant” is on the label. Although this does not mean these items won’t catch fire, it does indicate the items will resist burning and should extinguish quickly once removed from the ignition source.
- Avoid costumes made with flimsy materials and outfits with big, baggy sleeves or billowing skirts. Purchase or make costumes that are brightly colored to be clearly visible to motorists. For greater visibility, decorate or trim costumes with reflective tape that will glow in the beam of a car’s headlights. Children should also carry flashlights.
- Costumes should be short enough to prevent children from tripping or falling. Make up a child’s face with cosmetics rather than have a child wear a loose-fitting mask that might restrict breathing or obscure vision.

### *DECORATIONS & LIGHTING*

- Welcome trick-or-treaters with bright porch lights and have exterior lights on. Make sure all pathways to your home are well lit.
- Make sure your yard is clear of things such as ladders, hoses, dog leashes and flowerpots that could trip children.
- Candlelit jack-o-lanterns should be kept clear of doorsteps and landings, consider the possibility of using flashlights instead of candles to light them.

### *TREATS*

- Remind children not to dip into their treats until an adult has carefully examined all candy for signs of tampering, including small pinholes in wrappers and torn or loose packages. A good meal prior to parties and trick-or-treating will discourage youngsters from digging into their bag of goodies before they return home. Parents of young children should throw away gum, peanuts, hard candies, or small toys to avoid choking or hazards.

### **PARENTS—TELL TRICK-OR-TREATERS TO:**

- **Be back home by a certain time.** Set a time limit for your children to “trick-or-treat.” Also designate a specific route for them to take. Never trick-or-treat alone. Go with at least two friends for the entire evening. Have children call home if they need to. Provide them with a cell phone or change to make a call.
- **Carry a flashlight** and use it so that drivers can see you and you can see other people as well as hazards in the street.
- **Cross only at street corners**, never between parked cars, and never diagonally across an intersection.
- **Look in all directions before crossing the street**, and obey all traffic signals. Walk—never run, across the street. Use sidewalks, not the street for walking.
- **Do not accept rides from strangers.**
- **Do not take short cuts** through backyards, alleys, or parks.
- **Do not go inside anyone’s home.**

### **ADULTS**

- Keep dogs and other pets away from doors so children will not become frightened.
- Patrol your street occasionally to discourage speeding motorists, acts of malicious mischief and crimes against children.
- Call 9-1-1 immediately to report any suspicious or criminal activity to your police department.

### **MOTORISTS**

- Motorists should avoid all **unnecessary travel** on Halloween evening and when driving, they should drive slowly and be alert to small children crossing streets and for youngsters darting out into traffic whose vision may be obscured by masks.
- Stay alert! Many accidents occur when motorists are backing vehicles out of driveways, unaware of the presence of small children.
- Remember to **SLOW DOWN** and prepare for the unexpected.

### **PARENTS & KIDS**

- Schools, fire fighters, libraries, or civic groups in many communities organize “haunted houses” and other Halloween festivities for families. To avoid trick-or-treating troubles entirely, organize a Halloween costume party with treats, games, contests, music and scary stories. Make your Halloween party the place to be!