

Halloween Safety Tips

Halloween is one of the most popular holidays, but it requires careful attention to safety precautions. A report from the National Fire Protection Association lists Halloween as the fifth highest day of the year for candle fires (behind Christmas Eve, Christmas, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day).

If you use candles, make sure you do the following:

- Keep jack o' lanterns and other decorations containing lighted candles away from flammable materials. Cornstalks and hay bales are highly flammable!
- Use jack o' lanterns and other decorations containing lighted candles outside the home, if possible. Battery powered lights and flashlights are good alternatives to candles.
- Avoid placing candle-lit luminaries along pathways where trick-or-treaters' costumes may brush the luminaries and possibly catch fire.
- Supervise children around lit candles.

Other Fire Safety Tips:

- Remember that light bulbs also generate heat and can cause fire if they come in contact with flammable materials. Keep cornstalks and hay bales away from bulbs. Never drape a fabric ghost or other figure over a light bulb.
- Buy costumes, wigs and props that are labeled flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Teach children the "stop, drop and roll" technique in case their clothing catches fire. (Stop immediately, drop to the ground covering your face with your hands, and roll over and over to extinguish flames.)

Halloween Injury Prevention

- Parents or other adults should accompany small trick-or-treaters.
- Other children who trick-or-treat without parents should follow a planned route within their neighborhood. Make sure they travel with a friend, never alone, and that they understand they never should enter homes or automobiles.
- Exercise extreme caution when driving a vehicle. Be extra careful on Halloween to obey all traffic rules. Be on the alert for excited youngsters, whose vision may be obscured by masks, darting out into traffic. Children should stay on sidewalks and cross only at corners – never between parked cars.
- Trick-or-treaters of all ages should carry flashlights or light sticks so they are visible to motorists.
- Costumes should be short enough to deter tripping, and masks should provide full vision while not interfering with breathing. If a dark colored costume is worn, reflective tape can be added to enhance visibility after dark. Shoes should be sensible for walking.
- Treats should be inspected at home before they are eaten. Discard anything that looks as though it may have been tampered with.