



PRESS RELEASE

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Keep Halloween Safety in Mind at Home and On the Road

Halloween night is a fun and exciting time for kids of all ages; yet each year numerous children are injured or killed on Halloween night. According to Safe Kids Worldwide, children are twice as likely to be hit by a vehicle and killed, on Halloween, then on any other day of the year.

Common injuries on Halloween are slips, trips, and falls which are four times as likely to occur on Halloween, then on any other night of the year. In addition to injuries, Halloween-related deaths occur among children as well due to the lack of adult supervision. During this festive holiday season, Prince William County Fire & Rescue System Chief Tim Keen advises parents and guardians to closely supervise children when participating in Halloween activities to protect them from unintentional injuries or worse.

If you plan on trick-or-treating, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) summarizes Halloween safety as the following:

Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be short, soft, and flexible.

Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups or with a trusted adult.

Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see you. **(Be Seen On Halloween!)**

Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating them. Limit the amount of treats you eat.

Hold a flashlight while trick-or-treating to help you see and others see you. **(Be Seen On Halloween!)**

Always test make-up in a small area first. Remove it before bedtime to prevent skin and eye irritation.

Look both ways before crossing the street. Use established crosswalks wherever possible.

Lower your risk for serious eye injury by not wearing decorative contact lenses.

Only walk on sidewalks or on the far edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe.

Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls.

Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats unless you know the cook well.

Enter homes only if you're with a trusted adult. Otherwise, stay outside.

Never walk near lit candles or luminaries. Be sure to wear flame-resistant costumes.

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At Home

If you're expecting trick-or-treaters or hosting a Halloween party, be sure:

- Walking areas are well-lit and free of obstacles.
- Items lit with candles, i.e., jack-o-lanterns and luminaries:
 - Place away from doorsteps, walkways, landings, and curtains.
 - Place on sturdy tables.
 - Keep out of reach from children and small pets.
 - **NEVER** leave unattended.

On the Road

- Drive slowly and safely while being observant of children at intersections, medians, and curbs. Trick-or-treaters may move in unpredictable ways such as avoiding the use of sidewalks and running between parked cars.
- Turn your headlights on earlier in the day to spot children from greater distances.
- Slowly and carefully enter and exit driveways and alleys.
- Reduce any distractions inside your car, such as talking on the phone or eating.
- Discourage new, inexperienced drivers from driving on Halloween.

*** Remember: typical trick or treat hours are between 5:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.**

Halloween Decorations

When decorating for that added special effect follow these simple safety tips:

- Inspect decorations for loose connections, frayed or bare wires and broken or cracked sockets. Hang lights using plastic hooks or clips to reduce the risk of electric shock and fire hazards. **NEVER** nail or staple light strings.
- Don't overload extension cords. Use special, heavy duty extension cords for high wattage decorations such as fog machines and electrically powered inflatable decorations.
- Look for the UL Mark on light strings, electrical decorations, and extension cords. The UL Mark means the product has been found free of foreseeable hazards and is safer for your family.
- Keep candles away from items that easily catch fire, such as decorations, window treatments, and paper.

For more information on Halloween Safety, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov, Safe Kids Worldwide www.safekids.org, the National Fire Protection Association www.nfpa.org and the U.S. Fire Administration & Federal Emergency Management Agency www.usfa.fema.gov.