

Halloween Safety

Balfour Beatty Communities

Halloween is a favorite holiday for kids. But sometimes the excitement can cause trick-or-treaters to forget to be careful. The major dangers are not from ghosts and goblins, but from accidents including falling and, worse yet, getting hit by a car or encountering unsavory strangers. Here are some safety tips to help ensure a happy Halloween for the entire family.

SAFETY TIPS FOR TRICK-OR-TREATERS

No matter how excited you are to get out there and start trick-or-treating, always remember these important safety rules:

- Stay on the sidewalk, not in the street. If there is no sidewalk, keep to the left side of the road, facing oncoming traffic.
- Walk, don't run. Don't cut across yards or driveways where there could be an unseen tripping hazard.
- Carry a flashlight to light your way.
- Obey traffic signals. Look both ways before crossing the street and only cross at a corner or crosswalk. Never dart out from behind a parked car.
- Stay in familiar neighborhoods.
- Approach houses that have the porch light on. Accept your treats at the door and never go inside a stranger's house.
- Avoid wearing masks while walking from house to house. You should always be able to see what's around you.
- Don't attempt to pet any animals you don't know.
- Plan your route and share it with your family. If possible, have an adult go with you. (Children under 12 should always be accompanied by an adult.)
- Have a grown-up inspect your treats before eating. Never eat any candy if the package has been opened.

COSTUME SAFETY

There are a lot of potential dangers on Halloween night. Follow these simple steps to make sure your child's costume doesn't pose its own safety risk:

- Light-colored or reflective-type clothing is best so your child is more visible. (And remember to put reflective tape on trick-or-treat bags, bikes, and props, too.)
- Costumes should be loose so warm clothes can be worn underneath.
- Only fire-retardant materials should be used for costumes.
- Make sure the costume doesn't drag on the ground; it could be a tripping hazard.
- Face paint (make sure it's non-toxic -- check the label) is preferable to masks that can impair your child's vision.
- Make sure your child is wearing comfortable shoes, even if they don't go with the costume.
- Carry only soft, flexible swords, knives, or other props for your costume (no sharp objects!).

ADDITIONAL SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Give your child a good dinner before they go out trick-or-treating. This will make him or her less tempted to eat treats before you've had a chance to inspect them.
- Review all safety rules, including pedestrian/traffic safety rules before they set out. Remind them never to go into a stranger's house.
- Know their route and whom they are going with.
- Establish a time to be home; give them a watch that can be read in the dark.
- If any treats are suspect, throw them out. It's not worth the risk.
- Pin a slip of paper with your child's name, address, and phone number in case he gets separated from his friends.
- Finally, if you're driving in your car on Halloween night, take extra precautions. Drive slowly in residential areas and look for kids darting across the street.

