

Halloween Safety Tips for Children, Pets and Adults

A Message from Chief Broden

Halloween in the City of Avondale Estates
Friday, October 31, 2014, from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Flame Resistant Costume:

When purchasing costumes, masks, beards and wigs, look for the label "Flame Resistant." Although this label does not mean these items won't catch fire, it does indicate the items will resist burning and should extinguish quickly. To minimize the risk of contact with candles and other fire sources, avoid costumes made with flimsy materials and outfits with big, baggy sleeves or billowing skirts.

Costume Design:

Purchase or make costumes that are light, bright and clearly visible to motorists. For greater visibility during dusk and darkness, decorate or trim costumes with reflective tape that will glow in the beam of a car's headlights.

- Bags or sacks also should be light-colored or decorated with reflective tape.
- Children should carry flashlights to see more easily, and to aid in being seen.
- Costumes should be short enough so that children won't trip and fall.
- Children should wear well-fitting, sturdy shoes. Mother's high heels are not a good idea for safe walking.
- Tie hats and scarves securely to keep them from slipping over children's eyes.
- If your child wears a mask, make sure it fits securely and has eye holes large enough to allow full vision.
- Swords, knives, and accessories should be made of soft, flexible material.

Child Safety:

- NEVER eat any treats until they are examined by an adult at your home.
- Trick-or-Treat with friends or with adult supervision. Don't go alone.
- NEVER enter the house or car of a stranger.
- Trick-or-Treat in the late afternoon or early evening.
- Trick-or-Treat in your own neighborhood, and visit only houses that you know.
- Stay on streets that are well-lit and only cross the street at the corners.
- NEVER run across the street and always look both ways before crossing.
- Do not take short cuts through backyards, alleys or parks.
- Carry a flashlight or wear reflective tape so drivers can see you, and you can see potential hazards and other people.
- Only Trick-or-Treat at houses where the porch is well-lit.
- Do not play with lighters, matches, or fireworks!

Adult Safety:

- Welcome Trick-or-Treaters with your porch lights and any exterior lights on.
- Patrol your street occasionally to discourage speeding motorists, acts of malicious mischief and crimes against children.
- Report any suspicious or criminal activity to your police department immediately. In many areas you can dial 9-1-1.
- Candlelit jack-o'-lanterns should be kept clear of doorsteps and landings.

- Consider using flashlights instead of candles to light jack-o'-lanterns.
- Keep pets away from doors so children will not become frightened.
- Set a time limit for your children to Trick-or-Treat. Also designate a specific route for them to take.
- Feed the kids before they go so they will be less likely to eat the treats before they get home. Warn them not to eat anything before you inspect it.

Pet Safety:

- Don't leave your pet out in the yard on Halloween. There are plenty of stories of pranksters on this night.
- Halloween candies are not for pets. Chocolate is poisonous to a lot of animals. Tin foil and candy wrappers can be hazardous if swallowed.
- Be careful of pets around a jack-o'-lantern. Pets may knock over jack-o'-lanterns and cause a fire. Curious kittens especially run the risk of getting burned.
- Don't dress the dog in costume unless you know he loves it. Otherwise, it puts a lot of stress on the animal.
- If you do dress up your dog, make sure the costume isn't constricting, annoying or unsafe. Be careful not to obstruct their vision and get your dog used to wearing his/her costume before Halloween.
- All but the most social dogs should be kept in a separate room during Trick-or-Treating hours; costumed strangers can be scary for a dog.
- Be careful your cat or dog doesn't dart out through the open door.
- Walk your dog early in the night, before it gets dark.

Car Safety:

- Exercise extreme caution when driving a vehicle. Be on the alert for excited youngsters, whose vision may be obscured by masks, darting out into traffic.
- Motorists should avoid all unnecessary travel on Halloween evening, and all motorists should drive slowly.
- Many accidents occur when motorists are backing vehicles out of driveways. Make absolutely sure there are no small children behind your car.

Always use common sense, caution and adult supervision to make this Halloween the best ever. Have a fun, safe and Happy Halloween!