



HALL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

CRIME PREVENTION UNIT



CRIME PREVENTION BULLETIN

DATE: October 22, 2012

SUBJECT: Halloween Safety

With Halloween just around the corner, the Hall County Sheriff's Office encourages everyone to plan ahead to have a safe evening for the children as well as adults.

To ensure that trick-or-treaters, you, and your house stay safe, remember the following tips:

- Keep your house well lit, both inside and out.
- Clear your driveway and sidewalk of trip hazards or decorations that may be hard to see in the dark.
- Use battery powered lights in your jack-o-lantern and other decorations instead of candles, and keep them clear of other flammable materials.
- Ask your Neighborhood Watch or local citizen's group to tour the community during trick-or-treat time.
- You'll be opening the door to strangers all evening (something we normally advise against). Remain vigilant however, and don't allow a stranger to enter your home.
- Report any suspicious or criminal activity to law enforcement.

To make sure children's costumes are safe, keep the following in mind when buying or designing one:

- Try makeup instead of masks; it's more comfortable and doesn't obstruct vision the way masks can.
- Check to ensure that costumes are flame-retardant so that young ones are safe around jack-o'-lanterns, candles, and other flames.
- Keep costumes short to avoid trips and falls.
- Look for brightly colored costumes, attach reflector strips to costumes and bags, and remind trick-or-treaters to carry glow sticks and / or flashlights with fresh batteries.
- If a costume involves any sort of toy weapon, make sure that it does not appear too authentic and is made of a flexible material such as cardboard or foam.

Keep in mind the next few tips to make sure the night in the neighborhood will be safe and fun.

- Young children should be accompanied by a parent or trusted adult. Older kids should trick-or-treat in groups; kids of any age should never be allowed to trick-or-treat alone.
- Review the route for trick-or-treating beforehand and set a return time. Have a plan if your child gets separated from you or their group.
- Remind children to only approach homes that are well lit, and never enter a stranger's house or car.
- Teach kids to cross streets properly and safely.
- Place your child's emergency identification and contact information somewhere inside their costume or on a bracelet, etc.
- Use caution and drive very slowly through residential areas. Children may dart across streets at any time.

After a safe night around the neighborhood, remember that all treats should be inspected.

- Remind your children not to eat treats until an adult has checked them. A good meal before they go out will help reduce the temptation to snack before they are checked.
- Check all treats at home and in good light so they can be inspected carefully. Be especially wary of anything that is not wrapped by the factory or that is no longer sealed.
- Be mindful of possible food allergies and choking hazards for the little ones.

Have a safe and happy Halloween!

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