

HAVE A SAFE HALLOWEEN

The Massachusetts State Fire Marshal, Stephen D. Coan, offers the following tips for a safe and happy Halloween:

Costumes

- Children should carry a flashlight, and their costumes should be bright-colored or have reflective tape to highlight them.
- Be sure all parts of the costume are labeled flame retardant.
- Costumes should not have trailing material or tails long enough to cause falls.
- Pointed objects such as swords and devils' forks should be made of soft material.
- If your child wears a mask instead of makeup on their face, double check that the eye holes are large enough to see through clearly.
- Children should wear sturdy shoes and temperature appropriate clothing underneath their costumes.

Trick-or-Treating

- Smaller children should always be with an adult. It's best to take little ones out early.
- If older children are going out without you, go over the ground rules first!
- Know what neighborhoods they will be in.
- Don't allow them in areas with which you are not completely comfortable.
- Have the children stay in a group.

- Let them know what time to be home.
- Give them change to use the telephone if necessary.

Instruct children to:

- Use sidewalks.
- Cross only at the corners, never dart out between parked cars.
- Cover one side of the street at a time, no criss-crossing.
- Never go inside someone's home unless it is a friend's.
- Never accept a ride in a car.
- Only approach houses where the outside lights are on as a signal of welcome.
- Bring bags home to be checked by an adult before eating a single treat.

Checking Treats

- Throw out anything that appears tampered with, home-made foods or home-packaged foods unless you are certain of the source.
- Inspect fruit closely and take away treats that may not be age appropriate. Young children may choke on things like hard candy or peanuts.
- Use a small flashlight in pumpkins instead of

a candle.

- Only use flame-proof crepe paper.
- Keep dried leaves and cornstalks away from all flames and heat sources.

Receiving

Trick-or-Treaters

Make sure your own home is well lit and that there is a clear path to your door. Bicycles and lawn furniture can trip youngsters in the dark.

Fireworks

Firecrackers, cherry bombs and party poppers cause many injuries and fires on Halloween. These are dangerous and should not be used by children, teens or adults. Besides the physical danger and the fire hazards involved, fireworks are illegal in Massachusetts.

Change your clock,

change your battery

Each year around Halloween, we turn the clocks back one hour. This is a good time to also change the batteries in your smoke detectors. This year, buy batteries along with your Halloween candy and on Oct. 30 *Change your clocks and change your batteries.*