



Media Alert

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For immediate release

WCSO provides Halloween safety tips

(October 28, 2014) --Trick or treating on Halloween should be a great adventure for kids. But with all that excitement, kids as well as adults may be less careful than normal.

“Just a few simple safety precautions, along with some good old common sense, can help make this a Halloween a happy time for youngsters and their families and not a nightmare,” said Wayne County Sheriff Benny N. Napoleon.

To help ensure a fun and safe holiday, Sheriff Napoleon and Deputy Chief Larry Hall of the Sheriff’s Training Unit offer safety tips covering all facets of the Halloween celebration:



COSTUMES

- Plan costumes that are bright and reflective; add reflective tape or striping for greater visibility. Make sure costumes and shoes fit well to prevent tripping or falling.
- If a mask is worn, make sure eye holes are big enough to see in front and peripherally. You may have to cut them open further yourself. Consider non-toxic makeup and properly fitting hats and hat gear as safer alternatives to masks.
- Purchase only costumes, wigs and accessories that are flame resistant.

- Make sure any sword, cane or stick is not sharp or too long to avoid injuries.
- Carry glow sticks or flashlights to enhance visibility.

PUMPKIN CARVING

- Create a safe workspace. Set out carving materials on a well-lit, dry surface.
- Use the right tools. Pumpkin-carving kits contain specialty tools that can easily saw through rinds, poke holes, and scoop out innards without being razor-sharp.
- Don't let kids carve. Most Halloween accidents happen to children ages 10 to 14 so instead of carving, have the children draw the pattern with a marker and clean out the pulp and seeds with their hands or a spoon—but make sure an adult does the cutting.
- Point the blade away as you carve. No matter which carving tool you're using, point the blade away from you as you carve. If your hand slips, you're less likely to get hurt.
- Carve before taking off the top of the pumpkin. That way you won't be tempted to put your hand inside and cut toward your hand.
- Saw, don't slice, and take your time. Instead of using a sweeping movement, like slicing, try gently sawing through the pumpkin as you carve. The most common accidents associated with pumpkin carving are stab wounds to the fingers and palm that often occur as a result of hurrying and/or not paying attention.

TRICK-OR-TREAT TRAIL

- Do not allow your children to trick or treat alone. They should walk in a supervised group or with an adult.
- Know the route your children will take and make sure they know not to deviate from it.
- Have your children check in periodically by phone or by stopping back at home. Agree on a specific time they should return home.
- Only go to homes with a porch light on and never enter a home or car for a treat. Walk, don't run, from house to house.
- Remain on well-lit streets and always use the sidewalk if available. If there is no sidewalk, walk at far edge of roadway facing traffic.

SAY NO TO STRANGERS AND VANDALISM

- Let your children know they should never get into the car of a stranger at any time. If a stranger stops them and asks for help or offers candy, tell children to scream and run.
- Law enforcement authorities should be notified immediately of any suspicious or unlawful activity.
- Vandalism, such as throwing eggs at cars and houses, spray painting buildings, and putting toilet paper in trees, is not an acceptable part of Halloween.

HOME SAFETY TIPS

- Remove from the porch and front yard anything a child could trip over.
- Make sure your home is well lit before trick-or-treaters arrive.
- Sweep wet leaves and other debris from sidewalks and steps.
- Restrain pets so they do not startle, jump on, or bite a trick-or-treater.
- Reduce fire hazards. Consider using a light bulb or glow stick instead of a candle to light your pumpkin. If you do use a candle, do not place pumpkins near curtains or other flammable materials. Do not leave fire lit pumpkins unattended.

SAFE DRIVING TIPS

- Don't use a cell phone or other electronic devices while driving.
- Drive below the posted speed limit in residential areas. Children are excited on Halloween and may move.
- Pay extra attention for pedestrians at crosswalks, intersections, medians and the side of the road. The potential for vehicle-pedestrian related accidents increases four-fold on Halloween.
- Enter and exit driveways and alleys slowly and carefully.
- If you are dropping off or picking up your kids in an area, pull off the road into a safe spot and turn on hazard lights to alert other motorists.

- Discourage teens from driving on Halloween. There are too many hazards and distractions for inexperienced drivers.
- Be extra alert during the most popular trick-or-treating hours of 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

INSPECT ALL TREATS

- Instruct your children not to eat any treats until they bring them home to be examined by you.
- Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats made by strangers and fruits.
- If you have questions about suspicious looking treats, call your local police department.
- Remember, if in doubt, throw it out!