



Fort Belvoir Directorate of Emergency Services
Fire and Emergency Services Division
6100 Abbot Road
Fort Belvoir, VA 22060
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Halloween Safety Tips

Fort Belvoir, VA—October 27, 2015 – Everyone wants to have a safe and happy Halloween. Using safety tips and common sense can help make the most of your Halloween season and make it enjoyable and safe for everyone. Ensure it's a fun and safe Halloween again this year!

Some Facts:

- Decorations for special events, most often involving candles, account for an annual average of 1,000 home fires, causing nearly \$16 million in direct property damage, according to NFPA.
- In the United States, more than 100 people die each year as a result of their clothing igniting.
- Children are four times more likely to be hit by a car on Halloween than any other night of the year.



Tips:

- Purchase only those costumes, wigs and props labeled as flame-resistant or retardant. When creating a costume, choose material that won't easily ignite and avoid billowing or long-trailing features.
- Be sure children know the stop, drop and roll technique in the event their clothing catches fire. (Stop immediately, drop to the ground, covering your face with your hands, and roll over and over to extinguish flames.)
- Apply face paint or cosmetics directly to the face. It is safer than a loose-fitting mask that can obstruct a child's vision. If a mask is worn, be certain it fits securely. Cut the eyeholes large enough for full vision. Make costumes short enough to avoid tripping. Dress children in shoes that fit. Do not allow children to carry anything that could injure them if they fall.
- Provide children with lightweight flashlights to carry for lighting or as part of their costume.

"Keeping the Homefront Safe"



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- When planning party decorations, keep in mind that dried flowers and cornstalks are highly flammable. Keep crepe paper and other decorations well away from all heat sources, including light bulbs, heaters, etc.
- Let children be the artists and leave the pumpkin carving to adults. Children can draw the face of the jack-o-lantern, but only parents should handle the knives.
- Use flashlights as alternatives to candles or torch lights for decorations. They are much safer for trick-or-treaters, whose costumes may brush against the lighting.
- Use flashlights to illuminate Jack-o-lanterns. If you must use candles, use votives and be sure to place the pumpkin on a sturdy surface away from flammable objects.
- Remove outdoor safety hazards such as toys, bicycles and lawn ornaments. Make sure the driveway and stairs are cleared of leaves, which can be a slipping and falling hazard. Make sure that the driveway and walks are well lit for incoming trick-or-treaters. Replace burned-out or broken light bulbs.
- Before heading out to trick-or-treat, apply reflective wrist bands, tape, and stickers to costumes, bags and sacks and use a flashlight with fresh batteries to see and be seen.
- Children are four times more likely to be hit by a car on Halloween than any other night of the year. Accompany children and remind them to stop at all street corners before crossing, cross only at intersections and crosswalks. Teach them to look left, right and left again before crossing the street and to continue looking both ways as they cross.
- Instruct children never to enter a home or an apartment building unless accompanied by an adult. Restrict trick-or-treating visits to homes with porch or outside lights illuminated.
- Remember to keep exits clear of decorations, ensuring nothing blocks escape routes.
- Instruct children who are attending parties at others' homes to locate the exits and plan how they would get out in an emergency.
- Set a time for children to return home. Tell children to bring their treats home before eating them. Parents should check treats to ensure that items have not been tampered with and are safely sealed. Be careful with fruit. Inspect the surface closely for punctures or holes and cut it open before allowing a child to eat it.

"Keeping the Homefront Safe"