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“Halloween Safety”

While most people enjoy spooky decorations and scary movies this time of year, the truly frightening part of the holiday isn't ghosts or goblins, it's the real dangers that can happen if we're not careful. Pedestrian accidents, falls, burns, and poisonings are among the top hazards that can turn a fun night into a serious one.

Play it safe on Halloween and follow these tips:

Costumes

- Choose costumes and decorations that are flame-resistant or flame-retardant.
- Use reflective tape or stickers on costumes and trick-or-treat bags.
- Opt for non-toxic face paint or makeup instead of masks that can block vision.
- Have kids carry glow sticks and flashlights to help them see and be seen by drivers.
- Make sure costumes fit properly to prevent trips and falls.

Decorating

- Keep flammable materials such as hay bales, corn stalks, and paper decorations away from heat and flame sources, like candles, light bulbs, and heaters.
- Use battery-operated candles in jack-o-lanterns and outdoor displays.
- Set a reminder to blow out any candles and unplug lights at the end of the evening.

Walking

- Stick to sidewalks or well-lit paths and avoid cutting through yards.
- If no sidewalk is available, walk facing traffic and stay as far left as possible.
- Always stop and look before you cross the street. Make eye contact with drivers before crossing.
- Watch for cars that are turning or backing up and remind children to never dart out into the street or cross between parked cars.

Driving

- Slow down and be especially alert in residential neighborhoods.
- Eliminate distractions so your full attention is on the road.
- Watch carefully for pedestrians, especially when turning at intersections or entering driveways.

Trick-or-Treating

- Children under 12 should be accompanied by an adult. Older kids should stick to familiar, well-lit areas and follow a preplanned route.
- Inspect all treats before allowing kids to eat them. Discard candy with torn or loose wrappers.
- Throw away unpackaged treats like popcorn or loose candy.
- If you're uncertain about any item, it's safer to toss it.

Have a fun, safe, and not too scary Halloween!

Information comes from Kansas State University Publications and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.