

Simple CPSC Safety Tips Help Prevent Halloween Hidden Dangers

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CPSC Encourages Parents to Incorporate Safety into Celebration

WASHINGTON, D.C.- Children around the country are eagerly anticipating the night when they will wear their favorite costume and search for fun and delicious treats. As Halloween creeps up, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reminds parents and caregivers that when it comes to Halloween safety, there is no trick. Hidden dangers associated with costumes, treats, and decorations can be easily prevented, so that the holiday celebration is a real treat.

According to the CPSC, the most serious Halloween-related injuries involve burns from flammable costumes and decorations, including ignition from open flames, such as candles and Jack O'Lanterns. Other incidents have involved abrasions from sharp objects attached to masks or costumes.

"Home-made costumes that are not flame resistant continue to be the major concern," said CPSC Acting Chairman Nancy Nord. "When making a costume, parents need to use inherently flame-resistant fabrics, such as nylon and polyester. Also, they should avoid long-draped items that could cause an entanglement hazard."

CPSC helps keep children safe by enforcing the Flammable Fabrics Act and by recalling products at Halloween and throughout the year that can cause injury.

Follow these safety tips to ensure this year's holiday is a safe one:

Costumes

When purchasing costumes, masks, beards and wigs, look for flame-resistant fabrics such as nylon or polyester, or look for the label "Flame Resistant." Flame-resistant fabrics will resist burning and should extinguish quickly. To minimize the risk of contact with candles and other fire sources, avoid costumes made with flimsy materials and outfits with big, baggy sleeves or billowing skirts.

Purchase or make costumes that are light, bright and clearly visible to motorists.

For greater visibility during dusk and darkness, decorate or trim costumes with reflective tape that will glow in the beam of a car's headlights. Bags or sacks also should be light-colored or decorated with reflective tape. Reflective tape is usually available in hardware, bicycle and sporting goods stores.

Children should carry flashlights to see and be seen.

Costumes should fit well and not drag on the ground to guard against trips and falls.

Children should wear well-fitting, sturdy shoes. Oversized high heels are not a good idea.

Tie hats and scarves securely to prevent them from slipping over children's eyes and obstructing vision.

If your child wears a mask, make sure it fits securely, provides adequate ventilation, and has eye holes large enough to allow full vision.

Swords, knives and similar costume accessories should be made of soft, flexible materials.

Treats

Warn children not to eat any treats until an adult has examined them carefully for evidence of tampering.

Carefully examine any toys or novelty items received by trick-or-treaters under three years of age. Do not allow young children to have any items that are small enough to present a choking hazard or that have small parts or components that could separate during use and present a choking hazard.

Decorations

Keep candles and Jack O' Lanterns away from landings and doorsteps where costumes could brush against the flame.

Indoors, keep candles and Jack O' Lanterns away from curtains, decorations and other combustibles that could catch fire. Do not leave burning candles unattended.

Remove obstacles from lawns, steps and porches when expecting trick-or-treaters.

Indoors or outside, use only lights that have been tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory, such as UL. Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections. Discard damaged sets.

Don't overload extension cords.

Also, be sure to read OFPC's own [Halloween Fire Safety flyer](#)



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