

Halloween Safety Reminders

As families in Montgomery County are making their plans for Halloween, the Montgomery County Police Department would like to offer the following important safety reminders. Minimizing safety risks will help ensure a Happy Halloween for everyone.

1. “trick-or-treat” only in neighborhoods and at homes known to your family.
2. A parent, other familiar adult, or responsible older sibling should always accompany younger children.
3. Older children should plan out a trick-or-treating route with their parents, wear a watch, carry a cell phone and return home at an agreed upon time.
4. Children should never approach a home without lights.
5. Children should not eat any collected candy until an adult has inspected it.
6. Any unwrapped or partially wrapped candy should be thrown away.
7. Keep yard clear of items such as ladders, and hoses that could trip young children.
8. Battery jack-o'-lantern candles are preferable to using a real flame.
9. If you do use candles, place the pumpkins away from where trick-or-treaters will be walking or standing.
10. Keep paper or cloth yard decorations away from burning candles.

Children should **carry a flashlight** when trick or treating. They should walk on sidewalks where available, cross the street at the corner or in a crosswalk. Also wear brightly-colored, or reflective costumes that won't cause tripping. Face make-up is preferable to wearing a mask, but if a child is wearing a mask it should not impair the child's vision.

Motorists are advised to drive slower and with extra caution through neighborhoods on Halloween.

Halloween falls on Friday this year however there may be Halloween parties during the weekend. Any adults attending a party where alcohol is being served should utilize a designated driver, or take other measures to prevent drinking and driving. Parents of teens should take responsibility to make certain that alcohol is not available at teen Halloween parties.

Following these common sense practices adds an extra measure of safety for those families who would like to allow their children to trick or treat, and for those teens and adults who may be enjoying Halloween parties.

There are also good safety tips provided by area Humane Societies/Animal Shelters for families with pets:

- Keep pets inside. Pets, especially cats, can be vulnerable targets for pranksters on Halloween night. Keep them safe indoors to avoid possible trouble.
- More chocolate is sold on Halloween than at any other time of year. Be sure to keep pets away from candy bowls to avoid accidental ingestion of chocolate, which is harmful to dogs and cats. Also beware of candy wrappers, which can be hazardous if swallowed.
- Beware of jack-o'-lanterns lighted with candles - a wagging tail can easily knock them over and cause a fire hazard. Or a curious kitty can get his paws or nose burned by the flame. Use a safety glowstick or flashlight instead.
- Keep your pet safe in his own room during trick or treat time. A quick dog or cat can dart out a door that is opening and closing often. Also, the sight of strangely dressed people at the door can be very stressful for pets.
- Only dress up your pet if he is receptive to it. Don't cause undue stress on your furry friend. Use treat training to help your pet get used to his costume, but if he doesn't seem happy, take it off.
- Masks are never a good idea for pets. Masks can cut off peripheral vision, making a dog or cat nervous about its surroundings. Even the best behaved dog or cat can get nippy when he can't see what's coming from the side.
- Make sure your pet's costume fits properly, and does not constrict breathing or movement. Just as with a collar, make sure you can fit two fingers in between the costume and your pet's neck.
- Inspect the costume and remove any small or dangling pieces that could become a choking hazard.
- Don't forget to ID your pet! Shelters are always busy around holidays with pets that have wandered away from home. An ID tag or microchip helps identify your pet so he can be returned home if he gets lost.

Please report any suspicious person and/or vehicles to Police!

Emergency 911

301—279-8000 Non-Emergency Police