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# Press Release

# NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **BURLINGTON COUNTY URGES HALLOWEEN SAFETY**

### **Sheriff & Health Department Offer Guidance on Health & Safety**

With Halloween rapidly approaching, the Burlington County Health and Sheriff Departments today issued a list of precautions for parents aimed at ensuring the trick-or-treating is a safe one for their children.

“The practical advice we’re offering may seem a bit time-worn, but is worth repeating,” said Freeholder Mary Ann O’Brien. “The precautions range from making sure children do not consume treats which could result in illness to avoiding potential accidents while walking the neighborhood after dark.”

Sheriff Jean Stanfield, who chairs the county’s Traffic Safety Task Force, said trick-or-treating in groups is strongly encouraged, adding that children should visit only familiar homes, and carry flashlights.

“Children need to be supervised by a parent or guardian on Halloween to avoid any injury. Pedestrian fatalities involving children most frequently occur between 4 PM and 8 PM which is prime trick- or-treating time. Special precautions should be taken to ensure safety.” Stanfield said.

Children should also make sure parents know the route they plan to take, that they should never go into a home, and should never give their full name and address to those they encounter.

County Health Officer Robert Gogats said that the “treats” themselves are worthy of a little extra scrutiny (parents should check for tampering), and both children, and those offering treats, should lean toward nutritional items.

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## **PRESS RELEASE: Halloween Safety – 10/25/11 – Add One**

“We encourage nutritious holiday snacking,” said Gogats, “such as packages of dried fruits, lower-fat treats such as individually-wrapped packages of pretzels, ginger snaps, graham crackers and vanilla wafers.”

One tip: make sure children eat a satisfying meal before Halloween festivities begin.

Additional Halloween safety tips include:

### **Safe Halloween Costumes**

- Avoid theatrical and non-prescribed contact lenses. Several teens are turning to changing their eye color to resemble a favorite vampire or zombie. Without proper care, infection could incur.
- Because they can obstruct a child’s vision, masks are not recommended. If a child wears makeup, parents should look for non-toxic, hypoallergenic kits.
- Costumes should be flame-retardant and fit properly. Avoid oversized shoes, high heels and long skirts or pants that could cause a child to fall.
- Children who will be trick-or-treating after dusk should have reflective tape on their costumes and carry flashlights.
- Parents should accompany their children while trick-or-treating, and also remind their children never to go into a stranger’s house under any circumstances.

### **Pumpkin Carving Tips for Kids**

- Small children should never carve pumpkins. Children can draw a face with markers and then parents can do the cutting. Under parents’ supervision, children ages 5 to 10 can carve with pumpkin cutters equipped with safety bars.

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## **PRESS RELEASE: Halloween Safety – 10/25/11 – Add Two**

- Votive candles are safest for candlelit pumpkins.
- Lighted pumpkins should be placed on a sturdy table, away from curtains and other flammable objects and should never be left unattended.

### **Halloween Candy**

- Children shouldn't snack while they're trick-or-treating. Parents should check treats at home.
- Parents should have their child eat a healthy meal before trick or treating.
- Encourage friends and family to pass out fruit snacks or crackers for a healthier alternative to candy.
- Watch for signs of tampering, such as small pinholes in wrappers and torn or loose packages.
- Parents of young children should get rid of choking hazards such as gum, peanuts, hard candies or small toys.
- If a parent believes a Halloween treat may have been poisoned, or has been eaten and tastes funny or a child feels sick, he or she should call the Poison Control Center immediately at 1-800-222-1222. Local police should also be contacted.

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