
Press Release

NEWS

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BURLINGTON COUNTY URGES HALLOWEEN SAFETY

Sheriff & Health Department Offer Guidance on Health & Safety

With Halloween three days away, 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 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.

“We urge motorists and trick-or-treaters to exercise caution,” said Sheriff Jean Stanfield, who chairs the county’s Traffic Safety Task Force. “We encourage trick-or-treating in groups, visiting only familiar homes, and carrying flashlights.

“According to experts, child pedestrian deaths nearly double on Halloween, which is all-the-more reason to be particularly alert on this occasion,” she added.

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 provided some additional precautions, including:

- An adult should examine Halloween treats before children eat them. Never eat open or unwrapped Halloween foods.

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- Costumes should be flame-retardant and allow children to walk freely without tripping. Children's ability to see and hear should not be restricted by unwieldy masks.
- Make certain that any face paint or make-up used on skin or costumes is non-toxic.

In addition, said Gogats, the NJ Poison Information and Education System reminds parents, grandparents and other child care providers that poisonings often occur when children mistake pills for candy.

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.

“And, of course, 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.

Finally, there is the matter of costumes. Safety recommendations include:

- Tie hats, scarves, belts, etc. securely.
- Accessories (swords, pitchforks, etc.) should be made of flexible material.
- Encourage wearing of comfortable, well-fitting shoes.
- Attach reflective tape or material to costumes.
- Remove obstacles from steps, porches, lawns, driveways and walkways on which trick-or-treaters could trip and fall
- Provide adequate outdoor lighting.
- Refrain from having lit candles near areas where trick-or-treaters might be and take precautions with candles indoors, keeping away from curtains, decorations and other combustibles, and never leave unattended.

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