



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Howard County Police Prepare for Safe Halloween

Howard County Police will be out in force on Halloween to help ensure a safe and fun evening for children throughout the county. Officers will target residential neighborhoods to be very visible to citizens, prevent vandalism and ensure that children stay safe. Police also will conduct speed enforcement activities and be on the lookout for drunk or impaired drivers.

In an effort to prepare for a safe Halloween, the Howard County Police Department offers the following tips to parents and children:

- Encourage children to trick-or-treat before dark. After dark, an adult escort should carry a flashlight and choose well-lighted streets.
- Wear costumes that are short, snug and flame retardant. Flowing sleeves, capes and skirts can cause children to trip and can catch fire if they brush against candle flames. Also be sure to wear light colors or reflective tape.
- Avoid masks that can obstruct vision. Use face paint instead or make sure mask eye holes are wide enough.
- Discourage the use of fake knives, guns and swords, as they may result in aggressive behavior. If these types of props are used, be sure they are made of flexible materials such as foam or rubber.
- Stay in groups while trick-or-treating and make sure young children always are accompanied by adults.
- Teach children that they should NEVER go into a stranger's home or car.
- Browse the Howard County and Maryland sex offender registry lists at www.hcpd.org to determine which houses you may wish to avoid while trick-or-treating.
- Eat dinner before trick-or-treating to prevent the urge to eat treats before they have been inspected by parents. Never eat treats that have been opened.
- Leave porch or other outside lights on to make clear that trick-or-treaters are welcome.

The Howard County Sheriff's Office will x-ray candy for citizens on Halloween from 4 - 8 p.m. at the Circuit Court building, 8360 Court Ave. in Ellicott City.

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