

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** \_\_\_\_\_

October 18, 2019



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### **HALLOWEEN HAPPENINGS AND HELPFUL SAFETY TIPS**

SUFFOLK, VA (October 18, 2019) Halloween can be a fun and magical night for youngsters when they get to dress up and go trick-or-treating. The City of Suffolk wants everyone to have an enjoyable and safe time out and about on October 31<sup>st</sup>. We remind you that trick-or-treating is for those ages 12 and under and that trick-or-treating in Suffolk ends at 8:00 p.m. by City Code.

There are a multitude of events and activities sponsored by Suffolk Parks & Recreation, Suffolk Tourism, and Suffolk Public Library for ALL AGES to celebrate fall fun leading up to and on the big night including the following: Legends of Main Street: A Suffolk Ghost Walk; Cedar Hill Cemetery Stroll; Zombie Clean-Up; Investigation Station: The Berenstain Bears Happy Halloween; Pub Trivia Night – Supernatural Edition; Friday Night Frights at the Center – Classic Horror Films; The Haunting at Chuckatuck; Nightmare at Creekside; Drive-In Movie in the Park: Beetlejuice; Touch a Truck, Train & Trick or Treat; Chills and Thrills at Whaleyville Recreation Center; and more! Check out their respective websites for information for each event including dates, times, and whether advance registration is required. Most are FREE and open to the public, but some exceptions do apply for guided Tours and Walks.

The Suffolk Police Department and Suffolk Fire & Rescue remind you to please keep these safety tips in mind when out trick-or-treating:

## **COSTUMES**

- Plan costumes that are bright and reflective. Make sure that shoes fit well and that costumes are short enough to prevent tripping, entanglement or contact with flame.
- Consider adding reflective tape or striping to costumes and trick-or-treat bags for greater visibility.
- Because masks can limit or block eyesight, consider non-toxic makeup and decorative hats as safer alternatives. Hats should fit properly to prevent them from sliding over eyes. Makeup should be tested ahead of time on a small patch of skin to ensure there are no unpleasant surprises on the big day and removed in the evening to avoid possible skin irritation.
- When shopping for costumes, wigs and accessories look for and purchase those with a label clearly indicating they are flame-resistant.
- If a sword, cane, or stick is a part of your child's costume, make sure it is not sharp or long. A child may be easily hurt by these accessories if they stumble or trip.
- Review with children how to call 9-1-1 if they ever have an emergency or become lost.

## **CARVING A NICHE**

- Small children should never carve pumpkins. Children can draw a face with markers or use washable kids' paint.
- Consider using a flashlight, battery operated candle, or glow stick instead of a candle to light your pumpkin. If you do use a candle, a votive candle is safest.

- Candlelit pumpkins should be placed on a sturdy table, away from curtains and other flammable objects, and not on a porch or any path where visitors may pass close by. They should never be left unattended.

## **HOME SAFE HOME**

- To keep homes safe for visiting trick-or-treaters, parents should remove from the porch and front yard anything a child could trip over such as garden hoses, toys, bikes and lawn decorations.
- Parents should check outdoor lights and replace burned-out bulbs.
- Wet leaves should be swept from sidewalks and steps.
- Restrain pets so they do not inadvertently jump on or bite a trick-or-treater.

## **ON THE TRICK-OR-TREAT TRAIL**

- A parent or responsible adult should always accompany young children on their neighborhood rounds.
- Obtain flashlights with fresh batteries for all children and their escorts.
- Only go to homes with a porch light on and never enter a home or car for a treat.
- Wait to eat any treats until after they can be safely inspected at home in a well-lit environment.

Because pedestrian injuries are the most common injuries to children on Halloween, remind trick-or-treaters:

- Stay in a group and communicate where they will be going.
- Remember reflective tape for costumes and trick-or-treat bags.
- Carry a cellphone for quick communication.
- Remain on well-lit streets and always use the sidewalk.

- If no sidewalk is available, walk at the far edge of the roadway facing traffic.
- Never cut across yards or use alleys.
- Only cross the street as a group in established crosswalks where available.  
Never cross between parked cars.
- Don't assume the right of way. Motorists may have trouble seeing trick-or-treaters. Just because one car stops, doesn't mean others will!
- If a person, vehicle or situation seems suspicious, act on your gut instinct and call the non-emergency number, 923-2350, and let an Officer investigate. If you believe a crime is occurring, call 9-1-1 immediately.

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