

Township of
Langley



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NEWS RELEASE

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USE CAUTION AND CARE TO KEEP HALLOWEEN SAFE AND FUN

Decorations, costumes, jack-o-lanterns, and trick or treaters going door-to-door in the dark: it makes Halloween an exciting time of year for kids and grown ups alike, but while the celebration is supposed to be little spooky, it shouldn't be dangerous.

"Halloween is a lot of fun, but it is important to follow some basic safety rules while you are decorating, carving pumpkins, and planning what you are going to wear, to make sure you and your loved ones stay safe," said Public Fire and Life Safety Educator Krista Barton of the Township of Langley Fire Department.

"With trick or treating and many Halloween activities taking place in the dark, and people using candles to create an eerie mood, there is a real potential for danger during this particular holiday," she said. "However, by thinking ahead and making smart choices, people can protect their families and homes and make sure Halloween is enjoyable for everyone."

When choosing a costume for children or adults, avoid long trailing fabric that can get snagged, come in contact with sources of heat, or cause tripping. Always ensure eye holes are large enough to easily see out of when wearing a mask.

Trick-or-treaters need to carry flashlights or glow sticks, and children must be taught to stay away from open flames, including jack-o-lanterns with candles in them.

"Young ones need to know how to stop, drop, and roll if their clothing catches fire," Barton said. "Have them practice stopping immediately, dropping to the ground, covering their face with their hands, and rolling over and over to put the flames out."

"It is very important to ensure children are informed and prepared," she noted. "It only takes a few seconds to make a huge difference, and could potentially save their lives if the unthinkable happens."

When lighting up pumpkins, avoid open flames. Use a battery-operated candle or glow stick instead. If you do choose to use real candles, use extreme caution and make sure children are watched at all times when candles are lit. Use a utility lighter or long, fireplace-style matches to ignite candles in jack-o-lanterns. Make sure lit pumpkins are kept well away from anything that can burn and are placed far from walkways, doorsteps, and yards that will be frequented by trick or treaters.

When creating a Halloween mood in your home or yard, Barton urges residents to be cautious, as decorations are the first thing to ignite in 900 reported home fires each year, and two of every five of them are started by candles. Keep all decorations - especially dried flowers, cornstalks, and crepe paper, which catch fire easily - away from open flames and heat sources like heaters and light bulbs.

Also, ensure that decorations do not block escape routes. Keep all exits clear. Teach children who may be attending Halloween events at other people's homes to look for exits and plan how to get out in case of an emergency.

For more information, call the Township of Langley Fire Department at 604.532.7500 or visit tol.ca/firesafety.