

Township of
Langley



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N E W S R E L E A S E

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MAKE HALLOWEEN SPOOKY BUT SAFE

Halloween is an exciting time of year for kids and adults alike, and while it is meant to be a bit spooky, it shouldn't be dangerous.

"Halloween is a fun time of year, but it is important to follow some basic safety rules while decorating, carving pumpkins, planning your costume, and going door-to-door, to ensure you and your loved ones stay safe," said Public Fire and Life Safety Educator Krista Barton of the Township of Langley Fire Department.

"Because trick or treating and many Halloween activities take place in the dark, and candles are often used to create an eerie mood, there is a potential for danger during this particular holiday," she said. "However, thinking ahead and making smart choices can help protect families and homes and keep Halloween enjoyable for everyone."

When picking costumes for children – and adults – avoid long trailing fabric that can get snagged, come in contact with sources of heat, or cause tripping. Ensure eye holes are large enough to see out of easily 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.

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

Barton noted that it is important to ensure kids are informed and prepared: "It only takes a few seconds to make a huge difference, and could potentially save their lives if the unthinkable happens."

When illuminating pumpkins, avoid using open flames. Instead, use a battery-operated candle or glow stick. If you do use real candles, exercise extreme caution and make sure little ones are watched at all times when candles are lit. Use long, fireplace-style matches or a utility lighter to ignite candles in jack-o-lanterns. Make sure pumpkins with real candles 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.

Be cautious when creating a Halloween ambience in your home or yard, Barton said, 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. All decorations - particularly dried flowers, cornstalks, and crepe paper, which ignite easily – should be kept away from open flames and heat sources like heaters and light bulbs.

Also, keep all exits clear when decorating and be sure nothing blocks potential escape routes. Children who may be attending Halloween events at other people's homes should be taught to look for exits and plan how to get out in case of an emergency.

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