EUGENE POLICE NEWS RELEASE
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Safety is sweet: Safety should come first on trick-or-treat night
Halloween safety tips from the Eugene Police Department

Eugene Police urge children, parents, motorists and residents to follow a few simple safety recommendations this Halloween.

Tips for all residents:

- Motorists should drive extra cautiously on Halloween evening, as excited youngsters may forget some of their safety rules and dart out in front of cars.

- Residents are urged to have a well-lighted doorstep and yard, and to remove all obstacles from their lawns and steps to prevent children from being injured.

- Use small flashlights or disposable chemical light sticks in place of candles in Jack- O’-Lanterns. Keep matches, lighters and open flames away from children’s reach. Do not place candles on porches, in walkways, or near combustible materials. A fire could start, or children’s clothing could ignite and burn. Keep all decorations away from light bulbs and open flames.

- Pets and trick-or-treaters are safer, and the pets are less stressed, if the two are kept separated—if you live with a dog, keep him or her inside the house and away from the entryway during trick-or-treating time.

- Don’t want trick-or-treaters, or ran out of candy? Turn off lights and remove Halloween decorations from your porch to send the right signals.

Tips for trick-or-treaters and parents:

- Street safety is key. Children should cross only at corners—never between parked cars—and always remove masks before crossing streets. Watch for cars that may be turning into or backing out of driveways. Walk facing the oncoming traffic if there is no sidewalk.

- Keep safety in mind when designing or selecting costumes. They should be flame-resistant, reflective and safe. Shoes should be functional, to avoid falls (sneakers, yes; high heels, no); capes should break away, to prevent strangulation. A natural mask of nontoxic
face paint or cosmetics is safer than a mask, which can restrict vision or breathing; swords or knives should be made of flexible materials to avoid accidental or intentional injuries.

- The safest option is to take your kids trick-or-treating only in low-traffic neighborhoods where you know the residents, or at organized events. Second best, have a trusted adult accompany children on their trick-or-treating rounds. Third best—an option for older kids—be sure you know what route your children will take as they trick-or-treat with their friends, and set a time limit for returning home (make sure they carry a watch!).

- Serve kids dinner before trick-or-treating — this will help them resist temptation and save their treats until they get home. Although candy tampering concerns are based largely on an urban legend that has inspired a few real incidents and many more hoaxes, pigging out on candy isn’t good for anyone’s health or comfort! Examine the trick-or-treating haul and toss out anything that looks unsanitary or suspicious. Such problems are exceedingly rare, but police should be notified of any suspicious treats or inappropriate behavior at homes visited.

- Consider throwing your own Halloween party for your kids and their friends! An adult should be present at all children’s parties. Make certain that all popcorn poppers and other electrical appliances are in good working order. Replace any worn or frayed electrical cords.

Parents should teach their children:

- Vandalism and bullying in the name of fun is not acceptable. The Halloween holiday does not give kids permission to vandalize neighbors’ properties with eggs, toilet paper or spray paint; to bully, harass or intimidate smaller children; or to engage in other actions that could hurt someone, damage property or start a fire. Remind them that responsibility to the community and respect for others outweigh their desire to have fun at others’ expense.

- If a homeowner has turned off the porch lights, this means the household does not want to be visited by trick-or-treaters. They may be ill, asleep, unable to answer the door, or just plain out of candy.

- Never enter a stranger’s home unless their parent is along for the visit and says it’s okay.

- Go home immediately to report any dangerous or threatening situations.

Eugene Police will patrol as usual on Halloween evening and will have an additional Halloween presence with the help of Senior Patrol.

Let’s all work together to keep kids safe this Halloween!