



## Be Safe this Halloween!

Creepy costumes, haunted houses, and eerie ghost stories are just a part of the scary Halloween scene. However, the real scare during Halloween is the risk of injury for those young trick-or-treaters. Contrary to popular belief, the biggest danger is not the candy, rather it is car and pedestrian crashes. During Halloween, a pedestrian death is four times more likely than any other time. While children are gearing up for Halloween fun, parents should be taking efforts to prevent injury and keep kids safe.

### Street Smarts

During Halloween, one thing will be certain—excited children will fill the neighborhoods at dusk, running across streets, and from house to house. During the exact same time, cars will be on the road commuting home from work, or transporting trick-or-treaters to various neighborhoods. How predictable! What can't be predicted is a crash—which is why every driver and trick-or-treater should follow these rules to improve pedestrian safety.



### For Drivers:

- Drivers should slow down. During trick-or-treat time drive like you are in a school zone.
- Don't pass stopped vehicles. They may be dropping off children.
- Make complete stops at stop signs.
- Put down your cell phone. Avoid distractions by waiting until you are home to call, text or surf the Web.
- Watch for children darting into the street. Kids often cross the street anywhere. Most young pedestrian deaths happen at spots other than intersections.
- Yield to young pedestrians. Children might not stop, either because they don't see your car approaching or they don't know how to safely cross the street.
- Communicate with other drivers. Use your turn signals. If you have to pull over to drop off kids, use your hazard lights.
- Always buckle up! Kids should be properly strapped in whether you're taking them trick-or-treating down the block or to a party across town.

### For Trick-or-Treaters:

- Avoid trick or treating alone, walk in groups or with a trusted adult.
- Walk on sidewalks whenever possible, or on the far edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe.
- Teach children how to cross the street. Have them look both ways and cross

only at corners and cross walks. Limit street crossing by trick-or-treating to all the houses on one side of the street, then cross at the top, then go down the other side.

### Costume Common Sense

Costumes are the second safety issue of concern during Halloween. To reduce the risk of crashes caused by costumes, follow these rules:

- Pick light colored costumes for your children. They are easier to see in the dark.
- Use face paint rather than Halloween masks. Masks can make it hard for children to see. If your child must have a mask, be sure to pick one with large eye openings.
- Swords, knives, and other costume accessories should be soft and flexible.
- Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see trick-or-treaters.

### Sweets Safety

While no longer the biggest Halloween safety concern, candy safety should still be on parent's radar.

- Inspect candy for open wrappers and throw those treats away.
- Examine all treats for choking hazards.
- Avoid eating homemade treats from strangers.
- Be health conscious. Limit the amount of treats your kids eat!



## Bats and Halloween—What's the Connection?

Bats have long been associated with Halloween—perhaps because of superstition and stories of vampires changing into bats. However, the real reason is a bit more practical! Bats, by nature, become more active in the late summer and fall. Historical Halloween festivities typically involved bright bonfires to ward off bad energy and to cut the chill in the air. Bugs were attracted to the light of the bonfire, which also attracted their predator—bats! Because bats are more active this time of year, you may find them in your home. It is important to avoid contact with bats since they can carry rabies. Rabies is a virus that affects the nervous system. Although human cases are rare, most cases of rabies in humans, in the U.S., have been caused by rabies virus from bats. Without preventive treatment, rabies is fatal to humans.

Visit [www.scottcountyiowa.com/health/rabies.php](http://www.scottcountyiowa.com/health/rabies.php) to learn more about preventing bat bites and rabies.



**SCOTT COUNTY  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Scott County Administrative Center, 4th Floor

600 West 4th Street

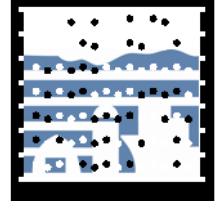
Davenport, Iowa 52801-1030

Phone: 563-326-8618

Fax: 563-326-8774

E-mail: [health@scottcountyiowa.com](mailto:health@scottcountyiowa.com)

Web site: [www.scottcountyiowa.com/health](http://www.scottcountyiowa.com/health)



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- Scott County Board of Health Meeting  
Thursday, October 18, 2012; 12:00-1:00 p.m.  
*Open to the Public. Location: Scott County  
Administrative Center, Board Room-1st Floor*

### OUR MISSION:

The Scott County Health Department is committed to promoting, protecting and preserving the health of the community by providing leadership and direction as advocates for the individual, the family, the community and the environment we serve.

### OUR VISION:

As recognized and respected leaders in serving and protecting our citizens, we at the Scott County Health Department are committed to a safer, healthier community and environment. In so doing, we provide a multitude of services with Professionalism, Responsiveness, Involvement, Dedication, and Excellence.



If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please subscribe to the Public Health Connection at [www.scottcountyiowa.com/health/connection](http://www.scottcountyiowa.com/health/connection) or e-mail [health@scottcountyiowa.com](mailto:health@scottcountyiowa.com) or call 563-326-8618.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.