



Greenburgh Police Department

Chief's Halloween Message

Joseph J. DeCarlo, Chief of Police



Halloween has now become a celebration for both children and adults which is evidenced by the opening of several large retail stores in the town dedicated solely to the sale of Halloween related items. This day has also evolved into the creative decorating of homes throughout the Town.

Although last year's Halloween festivities were limited due to the unusual snow storm, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the parents, teachers and student leaders whose collective efforts helped make the last several Halloweens safe and enjoyable to the many trick-or-treaters. This, of course, could not have been accomplished without the cooperation of our young people, most of who acted quite responsibly in their celebration of the holiday. To all those kids, a very special thank you.

We cannot, however, rest on our laurels and expect this Halloween to be as successful as last unless we maintain the same level of vigilance. Therefore, I am again requesting the cooperation of parents, teachers, student leaders and all of our young people in making Halloween 2012 safe and enjoyable. This year I will again assign additional police officers to patrol throughout the holiday. Their orders will be to take into custody those individuals who insist on ruining the enjoyment of the holiday for young and old alike by acting disorderly, terrorizing our younger citizens and committing acts of vandalism. People under 16 who are arrested will be processed as juvenile delinquents; those over 16 will be treated as adults. While these actions may, at first, seem a bit extreme or an overreaction to a fairly insignificant problem, my conversations with various civic and educational leaders have convinced me that such measures are indeed necessary to ensure the safety of our citizens and their property. I therefore appeal to ALL parents to impress upon their children the serious ramifications that engaging in this type of conduct can carry.

In past years I have been somewhat startled at the reaction of some parents when items such as eggs have been confiscated from their children on Halloween night. They simply could not see the harm in kids throwing a few eggs and resented the police interrupting their fun. Parents should be aware that egg throwing is the major cause of property damage occurring on Halloween. Such conduct results in the siding on homes and businesses being stained, broken windows, the obstruction of driver's views and injuries to children who are struck by them in the face or head. It is important that parents make their children aware of the harm that can be caused by egg throwing and insist that they not participate in this activity.

In closing, I also call upon our young people to keep Halloween safe and fun by resisting the temptation to be mischievous through avoiding those individuals and groups bent upon this intent. Keeping Halloween safe and happy is our collective responsibility and a task that can be accomplished as we noted last year. The police department is determined to do its share and asks for your cooperation.



CRIME PREVENTION BULLETIN

OCTOBER, 2012

Joseph DeCarlo

CHIEF OF POLICE

HALLOWEEN SAFETY

With Halloween just a week away, the Police Department would like to remind parents and children how to ensure that Halloween is both a happy and safe holiday. To this end we offer the following safety tips.

- Feed children prior to sending them trick or treating in order to help them resist the temptation to consume candy prior to its being inspected.
- Only purchase and allow children to eat wrapped or packaged candy. Impress on your children **NOR TO EAT ANY CANDY OR OTHER TREATS UNTIL YOU ARE ABLE TO FIRST CHECK IT.**
- Make certain that younger children are accompanied by an adult or a responsible teenager, whom you know, when they go door to door. Go with them yourself if you can. Have the older children use the **BUDDY SYSTEM** when trick or treating.
- Trick or treat in familiar neighborhoods and only approach well-lit homes.
- Try to have children trick or treat during daylight hours. If they must go out after dark, make certain that their costume is light in color. Consider using reflective tape on the costume to make them more visible to people driving cars. Insist they carry a flashlight.
- Explain to children that they should not enter homes or apartments unless they are accompanied by an adult they know.
- Know which friends your children are with and what route they plan to take.
- Caution children about running out from between parked cars or across lawns or yards. Instruct them to cross streets only at corners.
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- Have children walk on sidewalks. If there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic.

- Children should only be permitted to wear costumes, masks, wigs and beards labeled “flame retardant”. Remember, no fabric is fireproof.
- A face mask makes it difficult to see. Have them remove the mask before crossing a street. Better still, consider using makeup instead of a mask.
- Costume accessories, such as swords, and knives should be made of flexible material and not be sharp or have jagged edges.
- Try to create or select well fitting costumes. The trailing sheet or billowing cape is an invitation to an accident. Hats and scarves should be tied securely to prevent them from slipping over children’s eyes. Children should also wear well-fitting and sturdy shoes.

SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Check all commercially wrapped candy that your children may bring home for tapering.
- Discard any fruit or unwrapped treats.
- Notify the police of any suspicious treats.
- Keep cars parked off streets, if possible. Preferably, they should be parked in the garage or driveway.
- Keep areas outside your home free of obstacles, including burning jack-o-lanterns, which could be hazardous. Indoor jack-o-lanterns should be kept away from curtains or other furnishings that could be ignited.
- Illuminate the outside of your home as much as possible.
- Keep the path children will walk on clear and well lit.
- Keep house pets inside during the period trick-or-treaters are about.
- When driving, be cautious of trick-or-treaters.