

## Halloween Safety Tips

Planning ahead can help make this Halloween a fire-safe one. Taking simple fire safety precautions, like making sure fabrics for costumes and decorative materials are flame-resistant, can prevent fires.

During 1999-2002, decorations for special events accounted for an estimated 1,100 reported home structure fires per year, the majority involving candles as the heat source, and causing six civilian deaths and \$16 million in direct property damage per year

### Safety tips

- Purchase only costumes, wigs and props labeled flame-resistant or flame-retardant. When creating a costume, choose material that won't easily ignite if it is exposed to heat or flame. Avoid billowing or long trailing features.
- Dried flowers, cornstalks and crepe paper are highly flammable. Keep these and other decorations well away from all open flames and heat sources, including light bulbs, heaters, etc.
- Use flashlights as alternatives to candles or torch lights when decorating. They are much safer for trick-or-treaters, whose costumes may brush against the lighting.
- Use flashlights when illuminating Jack-o-lanterns. Use extreme caution when decorating with candle lit Jack-O-Lanterns, and supervise children at all times when candles are lit. When lighting candles inside Jack-O-Lanterns, use long, fireplace-style matches and be sure to place lit pumpkins well away from anything that can burn including doorsteps, walkways and yards.
- Remember to keep exits clear of decorations, ensuring nothing blocks escape routes.
- Use flashlights as alternatives to candles or torchlights when decorating walkways and yards. They are much safer for trick-or-treaters, whose costumes may brush against the lighting.
- Instruct children to stay away from open flames or other heat sources. Be sure children know how to **stop, drop and roll** in the event their clothing catches fire. (Stop immediately, drop to the ground, covering your face with your hands, and roll over and over to extinguish flames.)
- Instruct children who are attending parties at others' homes to locate the exits and plan how they would get out in an emergency.
- Provide children with lightweight flashlights to carry for lighting or as part of their costume.