

Halloween - Trick or Treating

We want you to enjoy Halloween, but remember, not everyone wants to take part!

Here's a few things to remember when you are celebrating Halloween.

10 top tips for staying safe this Halloween

1. Some masks can obstruct vision, a potential danger, when crossing roads. Consider using face paints instead.
2. If your children are trick or treating outside, make sure they are wearing visible clothing – consider using reflective tape and always ensure any costumes and masks are labelled as flame resistant.
3. When trick or treating, Children should go out in groups, younger children should be accompanied by an adult.
4. Older children should agree with parents or guardians in advance exactly where they are going and when they will be back.
5. Make sure children know not to enter anyone's house and not to accept lifts in people's cars.
6. Talk through the idea of trick or treat, and make sure your children don't do anything to upset or annoy the people they visit.
7. Keep to pavements and trick or treat on one side of the street before crossing safely to the other side – don't criss-cross.
8. Stay in well-lit areas where there are plenty of houses.
9. Carefully check all the things children have been given. Sweets and food that are still in their original wrappers are safest.
10. Remember – have fun but be safe!

There are two posters attached to this email, If you have an elderly or vulnerable friend, relative or neighbour who does not enjoy callers at their door, help them display the 'no' poster clearly in the window. If you do receive an unexpected caller at the door, don't feel pressured to answer if you don't want to. If you are taking your children out trick or treating, please be considerate and avoid houses who are displaying the 'no' poster.

You are also welcome to display the 'yes' poster if you would like to make it clear to trick or treaters that you are taking part this Halloween.

Bonfire / Firework Safety

Officers will be carrying out extra patrols in your area to keep you safe, however there are number of steps you can take to ensure a great Bonfire Night. Remember:

- An organised display is the safest way to enjoy fireworks.
- Fireworks are noisy (which can upset very young or elderly people as well as pets). They can cause damage and they can cause serious injuries if not used properly.
- Only buy fireworks from a legitimate retailer.
- It is an offence to buy fireworks by anyone under the age of 18. You can be fined or imprisoned for buying or using fireworks illegally.
- Shops are not allowed to sell fireworks louder than 120 decibels.
- It is an offence to let fireworks off between 11pm and 7am except on 5th November when the cut off is midnight and on Diwali, New Year's Eve and Chinese New Year when the cut off is 1am. It is also an offence to set off fireworks in the street, onto a road or in a public place.
- Anyone caught causing a nuisance with fireworks will receive an instant fine of £80 and any fireworks found on a person under 18 will be confiscated.
- Always inform your neighbours if you are using fireworks and be considerate.
- Keep bonfires small and manageable and build them away from houses, garages, sheds, fences, overhead cables, trees, bushes and vehicles.
- Never use flammable liquids – paraffin or petrol – to light the fire.
- Avoid drinking alcohol whilst in charge of a bonfire or fireworks and particularly when supervising children.
- In case of an emergency, keep buckets of water, the garden hose or a fire extinguisher ready.
- Make sure your fireworks conform to British Standards BS 7114, EN 14035 or EN 15947.
- Keep fireworks in a closed box and use/light them one at a time.
- Light the firework at arm's length using a taper or fuse wick and stand well back - never return to a firework once it has been lit.
- Only children over the age of five are allowed to use sparklers and should be supervised by an adult at all times.
- Remember, if you break the law on fireworks you could be sent to prison for up to six months or a child's parents or carers could receive a fine.

Fireworks Code - Before they explode read the code!

- 1 Light sparklers one at a time and wear gloves
- 2 Never give sparklers to a child under 5
- 3 Buy fireworks marked BS 7114
- 4 Keep fireworks in a closed box
- 5 Follow the instructions on each firework
- 6 Light them at arm's length using a taper
- 7 Stand well back
- 8 Never go back to a lit firework
- 9 Never put fireworks in your pocket
- 10 Never throw fireworks
- 11 Keep pets indoors

Safety Advice

Take Care With Sparklers

Sparklers can reach a temperature of up to 2,000°C, I'm sure you'll agree that's quite hot!

So when handling them, always wear gloves. And when you've finished, have a bucket of water which people can plunge them in. If you're giving them to children, then make sure they're observed at all times.

Children under five should never hold a sparkler. Instead, you can give them a glow stick so they don't feel left out, and it will last a lot longer than a sparkler.

Have Someone In Charge

You need to delegate one person to be in charge of the display. Give them a hi-vis vest so everyone can easily identify and find them. They should abstain from drinking, at least until after the display.

Doing otherwise increases the risk of injury, and means they're less able to supervise properly. Equip them with a torch to see what they're doing and a hat, gloves and goggles to keep them protected.

Buying Your Fireworks

Always buy fireworks from a reputable shop. Don't cut corners trying to save a few quid and don't buy from places you're unsure about. All fireworks that conform to British Standards should have BS 7114 written on the packaging.

Also, make sure you buy fireworks which are appropriate. Most fireworks in Categories 1 to 3 will be okay for a garden display. All Category 4 fireworks are only for professional displays.

Setting Off The Fireworks

Long before you set them off, you should have read the instructions and prepared in the daylight. Let your neighbours know and remember it's better to be over cautious. Make sure the area is clear of animals and people, and that all your guests are stood well back. Only light one firework at a time and never return to a firework after you've lighted it.

Once lit, run to safety and watch the beautiful fireworks light up the sky.

And Just In Case

Unfortunately, things can go wrong from time to time. If someone does get burnt, then remain calm. Cool the burn with cold water, then cover and go to a hospital if it's serious. Maybe have a small first aid kit to hand for such accidents.

Should someone's clothes catch alight, then get them to perform the stop, drop and roll. Have a fire blanket which you can also wrap around someone will put out the flames. And having a 2kg powder fire extinguisher means you can act quickly and prevent a small fire escalating.

Who to contact to report suspicious activity or a crime?

- If there is a threat to life or public safety, or you suspect a crime is in progress, call 999
- To report a crime other than a crime in progress call 101 or visit the Kent Police website to access the 'Live Chat' facility.