



# OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FIRE MARSHAL

JB Pritzker, Governor  
Matt Perez, State Fire Marshal

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## **State Fire Marshal Encourages Everyone to Think Fire Safety when Decorating for Fall and Halloween**

*More than one-third of home fires where decorations were involved were started by a candle.*

Springfield, Ill- The Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (OSFM) reminds residents to keep fire safety in mind when putting up fall or Halloween decorations. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), from 2014-2018, an average of 770 home structure fires began with decorations per year across the nation. More than two of every five (44%) of these fires occurred because the decorations were too close to a heat source, such as a candle or hot equipment. More than one-third (36%) of these fires were started by candles.

When choosing a Halloween costume for your children stay away from long trailing fabric. If your child is wearing a mask, make sure the eye holes are large enough so he or she can see out. Provide children with flashlights to carry for lighting or glow sticks as part of their costume. Tell children to stay away from open flames including jack-o-lanterns with candles in them. Be sure they know how to stop, drop and roll if their clothing catches fire.

“Fall and Halloween decorations not only make our homes look fun and spooky, but they also pose an increased fire risk that can be truly scary. Check to ensure all smoke alarms are working in your home! When decorating, think fire safety first by keeping decorations away from any open flames, don’t block exits from the home, and consider using battery-operated candles or glow-sticks in jack-o-lanterns to reduce the risk of fire,” said Illinois State Fire Marshal Matt Perez.

Keep these fire safety tips in mind to have safe and spooky Halloween.

- *Use a battery-operated candle or glow stick in jack-o-lanterns*
- *When choosing costumes, stay away from long trailing fabric*
- *Teach children to stay away from open flames, including jack-o-lanterns with candles in them.*
- *Dried flowers, cornstalks, and crepe paper catch fire easily. Keep all decorations away from open flames and other heat sources like light bulbs and heaters*
- *Provide children with flashlights to carry for lighting or glow sticks as part of their costume.*
- *Remember to keep exits clear of decorations so nothing blocks escape routes. Make sure all smoke alarms are working.*