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Make Fire Safety the Top Priority when Decorating for Fall and Halloween

Decorations were the first thing to ignite in roughly 800 reported home fires each year

Springfield, Ill- The Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (OSFM) encourages everyone to keep fire safety tips in mind when putting up Halloween and Fall decorations. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) decorations were the first thing to ignite in roughly 800 reported home fires each year. More than two of every five of these fires occurred because the decorations were too close to a heat source, such as a candle or hot equipment.

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 add a spooky flare to our homes but also increase the risk for accidental fires. Consider using battery powered or flameless candles in jack-o-lanterns," **said Illinois State Fire Marshal Matt Perez.** "Make sure your smoke alarms are working and keep any decorations away from a heat source. Taking a few of these simple steps will help to create a spooky season that doesn't turn into a scary situation."

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.*

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