



OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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Dale Simpson, Acting State Fire Marshal

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Keep Halloween Fire Safe to Avoid a Scary Situation

Each year from 2017 to 2019, an estimated average of 9,200 fires were reported to fire departments in the United States over a 3-day period around Halloween

Springfield, Ill- Halloween is an exciting time for kids and adults as they search for that perfect costume and decorations are added to homes providing a spooky feel to the season. However, fall and Halloween decorations can add an increased fire danger to your home if you don't keep fire safety in mind.

According to the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), each year from 2017 to 2019, an estimated average of 9,200 fires were reported to fire departments in the United States over a 3-day period around Halloween. These fires caused an estimated annual average of 25 deaths, 100 injuries, and \$117 million in property loss. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reports that 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.

"Halloween is an exciting time for many and keeping fire safety in mind is just as important as picking out that perfect costume. Introducing dried vegetation and other decorations into our homes increases the risk for an accidental fire," said **Acting Illinois State Fire Marshal Dale Simpson**. "Consider using glow sticks or battery powered candles in your jack-o-lanterns to reduce the chances of an accidental fire occurring."

Taking a few simple steps will help to create a spooky season that doesn't turn into a scary situation.

- *Use a battery-operated candle or glow stick in jack-o-lanterns.*
- *When choosing costumes, avoid long trailing fabric.*
- *If your children are wearing a costume mask, make sure the eye holes are large enough so the child can see out.*
- *Teach children to stay away from open flames, including jack-o-lanterns with candles in them.*
- *Be sure children know how to stop, drop, and roll if their clothing catches fire.*
- *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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