



**NEWS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS**

**PURCELLVILLE, Va. October 20, 2020** — The Purcellville Police Department’s annual Halloween safety tips look a bit different this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we hope that everyone can still find ways to celebrate safely, while still having fun.

If you are planning to celebrate this season, consider the following guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Virginia Department of Health (VHD) and the Loudoun County Health Department to help prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.

If you are out and about on Halloween, please remember the following safety tips that are still in effect, regardless of your level of participation of festivities:

- Always walk safely, using sidewalks and crossing at crosswalks when available.
- Drivers, please drive slowly, especially through neighborhoods, anticipate possible additional pedestrian traffic.
- Keep costumes safe and creative. Parents make sure costumes are visible either with light colors or reflective tape or stickers, and that children can clearly see out of any masks and/or head coverings. Have kids carry glow sticks and/or flashlights to help them see and be seen by others, even if not trick or-treating, but outside after dark participating in lower-risk activities suggested below.
- Children under the age of 12 should not be alone at night without adult supervision. Always have an adult inspect your candy before consumption. Children and parents should be aware that a “candy fee” for inspection is not against the Town of Purcellville Code of Ordinances.

**The Health Department does not recommend door-to-door trick-or-treating because that is considered high risk for COVID-19 transmission for both the trick-or-treater and for the person handing out candy. If you and your family engage in any Halloween activities, it is important to protect yourself by following these recommendations:**

- **Stay home and away from others if you are sick.** Anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and has not met the criteria for when it is safe to be around others, has COVID-19 symptoms or who has been in recent contact with someone with the disease should not participate in Halloween activities this year.

- Be sure to **maintain at least 6 feet of distance** between yourself and others who do not live in your household at all times.
- **Wash your hands** before going trick-or-treating or handing out candy. Hand sanitizer should be used while trick-or-treating or handing out candy when soap and water aren't available.
- **Wear a cloth face covering.** Halloween masks may not fit snugly against the face and may not cover the nose and mouth. Halloween masks with gaps and holes do not protect against inhaling respiratory droplets from other people. Wearing a cloth face covering under a Halloween mask may make it hard to breathe and is not recommended.
- **Hand out candy from a distance.** Consider setting up an area outside, like a folding table, to set out candy. Space out the placement of treats so that multiple people do not have to reach into the same bowl or find contactless ways to deliver treats, like a candy chute that is more than 6 feet long.

As you and your family prepare for Halloween and fall activities, remember that the following activities are considered higher risk by the CDC and VDH and are **not recommended** by the Health Department:

- Traditional trick-or-treating where treats are handed to children who go door to door.
- Trick-or-treating at houses where individuals are not wearing a mask and where 6 feet of physical distance is not maintained between individuals.
- Trunk-or-treating where treats are handed out from trunks of cars lined up in large parking lots.
- Crowded costume parties held indoors and any events where social distancing is difficult to maintain.
- Indoor haunted houses where people may be crowded together and screaming.
- Hayrides or tractor rides with people who are not in your household.
- Rural fall festivals outside your community.
- Using alcohol or drugs, which can cloud judgement and increase risky behaviors.
- Traveling to and from areas outside your community, particularly to and from areas with community spread of COVID-19, to attend fall festivals and holiday activities.

Instead, consider some **lower-risk activities** that can be enjoyed with family, neighbors or friends at a safe distance. The Purcellville Parks and Recreation Department has come up with some wonderful alternative ways to celebrate. Find a list of their activities at <https://purcellvilleva.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2208>. In addition, below are some safer ways to celebrate:

- Pumpkin carving or decorating outside at a safe distance.
- Decorating homes.
- Outdoor movie night at a safe distance.
- Neighborhood costume parades at a safe distance.
- Outdoor touch-free scavenger hunts in which children look for Halloween-themed items.
- Virtual Halloween costume contests.
- Online photo contests for decorations and costumes.

For those who chose to participate in Halloween activities, we encourage you to make a plan to do so safely in a way that you and your family feel comfortable, but is also considerate of our community's health. For more detailed information, please see the following information available online:

- [Get more ideas and tips for a safe Halloween from the CDC website.](#)
- [Read the VDH Interim Guidance for Halloween Events, Including for Operators of Haunted Houses.](#)

**The Town of Purcellville, Virginia**

"Purcellville-your small Town, where history and progress intersect and people prosper," is an award-winning town of over 10,000 residents located in Loudoun County, approximately 50 miles west of Washington, DC. Having received the prestigious Siemens Sustainability Award for Small Communities, Purcellville continues to be honored for its green initiatives with most recently being the Tree City USA recipient for the 12<sup>th</sup> year. The Town was reaffirmed as a AAA rated community by S&P Global Ratings, the highest credit rating possible, and is recognized as one of the safest towns in Virginia. Once a stop along the W&OD rail line, which has been converted to a multi-use trail from Alexandria, VA to Purcellville, the Town has maintained its historic old-town feel through the restoration and maintenance of its many downtown structures, reflecting the Victorian architecture popular during the early 1900s. Today, Purcellville is the economic hub of western Loudoun County and a popular weekend destination for antiquing, equestrian activities, farmer's markets, wineries, breweries, distilleries and restaurants. More info at [www.purcellvilleva.gov](http://www.purcellvilleva.gov).

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