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# OREGON

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## **For Immediate Release**

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### **State Fire Marshal encourages citizens to be fire safe during Halloween**

With an increased risk of fire in the days surrounding Halloween, Oregon State Fire Marshal Mark Wallace reminds residents to keep fire safety at the forefront when participating in Halloween festivities.

“We want to remind families to remember fire safety when decorating and participating in activities throughout the Halloween weekend,” says State Fire Marshal Mark Wallace. “Events and activities surrounding Halloween can increase the risk of fire and injuries. Combining an increase in candle use with decorations, costumes, and children, you have an increased fire risk. A safer option is to use battery-operated candles.”

In the four-day period surrounding Halloween (Oct. 29 through Nov. 1), over the past five years there have been 196 structure fires in Oregon resulting in one fatality, eight injuries, and more than \$4.8 million in property damage.

With Halloween just a few days away, here are some tips from the Office of State Fire Marshal:

- Only purchase costumes, wigs, and props labeled flame-resistant or flame-retardant.
- Avoid flowing costumes or those that drag; these may easily contact an open flame and catch fire.
- Keep flammable materials such as dried flowers, corn stalks, hay bales, crepe paper, and other decorations well away from open flames and heat sources including light bulbs, heaters, etc.
- Keep exits clear of decorations, so nothing blocks escape routes.
- Teach children to Stop, Drop, and Roll should their costume catch fire.
- Use flashlights or battery-operated candles when illuminating jack-o-lanterns, instead of candles.
- Use flashlights as alternatives to candles or torchlights when decorating walkways and yards.

- If using candles, place them out of reach of children and pets.
  - Always use a sturdy metal, glass, or ceramic candleholder.
  - Never leave candles burning unattended and be sure to blow them out before leaving the room or before going to sleep.
  - Don't light candles with items embedded in them such as twigs, flowers, or leaves.
- Check decorative light sets for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections. Dispose of any damaged sets.
- Don't overload extension cords or electrical sockets.
- Be sure to have working smoke alarms on every level of your home, outside each sleeping area, and inside each bedroom.
- Fight arson by reporting suspicious activity in your area to your local law enforcement agency.

More fire safety information is available at:

[http://www.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/Pages/Com\\_Ed\\_Section.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/Pages/Com_Ed_Section.aspx).

If you are planning to host a haunted house, you can find state regulations at:

<http://www.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/docs/Codes/AppendixK.pdf>.

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