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Clover Connection

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Halloween Makes It More Than Spooky on the Road Halloween Safety for Pedestrians, Bicyclists, and Motorists

Halloween means children getting outdoors to enjoy treats, fun, and games. Although Halloween comes before the change back to standard time this year, the days are getting shorter, and the nights are getting longer. With shorter days comes more night driving. Because nighttime driving is more dangerous, it requires extra attention from motorists, as well as pedestrians and bicyclists. Sadly, Halloween also increases the number of drunk drivers on the road at night. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that from 2012 to 2016, 44% of all people killed in motor vehicle crashes on Halloween night were in crashes involving a drunk driver.

NHTSA also reports that nearly two-thirds of all fatal pedestrian crashes and about 20% of fatal bicycle crashes occur in low-light conditions. The large number of young pedestrians out on Halloween evening makes this an especially dangerous time.

That's why Texas A&M AgriLife Extension reminds motorists, parents and children of the following safety tips to keep in mind during Halloween and all year long.

Tips for Motorists

- Slow down. Watch for children walking on roads, medians, and curbs. Enter and exit driveways carefully.
- Be especially alert for children darting out from between parked vehicles and from behind bushes and shrubs. They're excited – and they are not paying attention.
- Never drink and drive – tonight or any night. If you are partying, designate a driver.

Tips for Parents

- Adults should accompany children at all times and supervise their "trick or treat" activities.

- Teach children to “stop, look left-right-left, and listen” before they cross the street.
- Use a flashlight, and wear retro-reflective strips or patches on your clothing or costume to be more visible to motorists.
- Be certain that the mask does not obstruct vision or hearing.
- Ensure that costumes do not impede walking or driving ability.

Tips for Pedestrians (children and adults)

- Before crossing a street, stop at the curb or edge of the road and look left, right, and left again to be sure no cars are coming. Continue to check for traffic while on the street.
- Walk – never run – from house to house or across the road.
- Cross the street only at intersections and crosswalks.
- When crossing at an intersection with a traffic light, be sure to watch for turning cars. Obey all pedestrian signals.
- Walk on sidewalks whenever possible. If there are no sidewalks, walk on the left side of the street facing traffic.

By taking some extra time to make sure drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists obey the rules, Halloween can be a safe time for all.

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Back to School Planner.

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