



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Police prepare for safe Halloween

Detectives conduct pre-holiday check of registered sex offenders

Howard County police want to remind residents that officers will be patrolling on Halloween to help ensure a safe and fun evening for all.

In preparation, Howard County police recently conducted a check of all registered sex offenders in the county. The goal of the sweep was to identify anyone in violation of the registry's reporting requirements and to remind registered offenders that they are discouraged from participating in trick-or-treating.

Detectives accounted for all 104 registered sex offenders in Howard County. Of those offenders, 102 were in compliance with the requirements of the registry. Two were in violation, and were located and arrested. Parents who want to be aware of offenders' residences when mapping out a child's trick or treating path can check the registry from the police department's home page at www.HCPD.org.

Throughout the evening, officers will be alert for vandalism, theft and destruction of property. They will conduct speed enforcement activities and be on the lookout for drunk or impaired drivers. Nearly half of all crash fatalities on Halloween night in recent years involved a drunk driver, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

In an effort to prepare for a safe Halloween, police are offering the following tips:

- Encourage children to trick-or-treat with a group, and before dark. After dark, an adult chaperone should carry a flashlight and choose well-lighted streets.
- Wear costumes that are short, snug and flame retardant. Also be sure to wear light colors or reflective tape. Avoid masks that can obstruct vision.
- Teach children they should NEVER go into a stranger's home or car.
- Remind children not to eat treats before they have been inspected by parents. Never eat candy that has been opened.
- Tell trick-or-treaters not to take shortcuts through backyards, alleys or playing fields.
- Leave porch or other outside lights on to make clear that trick-or-treaters are welcome. Don't let children approach homes that are dark.
- Remove objects from your yard that might present a hazard to visitors.
- Drive slowly all evening – you never know when a trick-or-treater may dart into the street.

Follow along with us on Twitter @HCPDNews as Howard County officers are out and about on Halloween night!

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