



Halloween Celebration Recommendations

Halloween celebrations may look a little different this year because of COVID-19, but following recommended precautions will help make the risk for spreading illness less scary. To help little ghouls and goblins enjoy the festivities safely, parents need to have conversations with their kids about the importance of practicing social distancing, washing hands regularly, avoiding commonly touched surfaces and wearing masks.

Many traditional Halloween activities can be high-risk for spreading illness, but there are safer ways to participate that lower these risks. The [St. Charles County Department of Public Health](#) joins the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) in issuing recommendations for:

General Precautions

- Smaller attendance, outdoor activities — where social distancing and mask wearing are enforced — are lower risk than crowded, poorly ventilated or indoor activities.
- Gathering with immediate family members or a small number of individuals whom you know have practiced social distancing.
- Wearing disposable or cloth masks at all times – by children and adults. Incorporate decorated face coverings into costumes, as traditional, store bought costume masks are not an appropriate substitute for protective face coverings.
- Frequently washing hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer containing at least a 60 percent alcohol base. Including when collecting or distributing treats or around commonly touched surfaces.
- Any individual who is sick, is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, is awaiting test results, or may have been exposed to the virus should stay home and avoid contact with others.
- Avoid in-person contact with others if you or other members of your household have an increased risk for severe illness or chronic disease.

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Trick or Treating

- Limit trick-or-treating to local neighborhoods and gather with your immediate family or those with whom you know have practiced social distancing. Only visit the homes of individuals that you know and that appear to be celebrating the holiday festivities.
- Avoid congregating in large groups, and remain distanced while walking the neighborhood, even when outdoors. Limit the length of time you may be in contact with other individuals.
- Practice the 3 Ws – Watch distances, Wear masks, Wash hands
 - Remain at least 6 feet from others throughout the evening (at least 2 arms' length)
 - Adults and children should wear protective face coverings at all times – whether collecting or distributing treats. Traditional costume masks are not an appropriate substitute.
 - Frequently wash hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer containing at least a 60 percent alcohol base throughout the festivities.
- Consider purchasing supplemental candy in advance that children could enjoy on Halloween night and allow collected treats to set aside for 72 hours before consumption. Parents/Guardians should inspect treats prior to consumption and discard any unwrapped items.
- When distributing treats, give pre-bagged packages that can be picked up by visitors themselves on socially distanced tables on a driveway or yard, as opposed to handing out individual treats at the door. Routinely wash commonly touched surfaces with an approved sanitizing product.
- In addition to routine washes throughout the evening, thoroughly wash hands with soap and water at the conclusion of trick-or-treating and/or distributing treats.

Community/Neighborhood Events

- Host or attend limited participation, outdoor activities where social distancing and mask wearing are enforced – as opposed to crowded, poorly ventilated indoor or outdoor events.
- Increase the length of event operations to limit attendance during scheduled periods.
- Encourage participants and staff to practice the 3 Ws – Watch distances, Wear masks, Wash hands
- Arrange operations to limit traffic to accommodate one-way, socially distanced pathways.
- Recognize that events that promote screaming, singing and other activities can increase the risk for spreading respiratory illness. Increase distances where needed in these areas.
- Limit group activities to those within an immediate household and monitor activities to ensure that social distancing is practiced.
- For Trunk-or-Treat events, require at least one empty parking space between vehicles to accommodate social distancing. Use event maps and signage to manage traffic flow.
- For hayrides, limit the number of participants to encourage social distancing.
- Provide sufficient hand washing stations throughout the event.
- Organizations hosting community activities are encouraged to contact the Department of Public Health for guidance on additional measures to reduce the spread of illness in St. Charles County. Please call 636-949-1899 for assistance.

Suggestions for Lower Risk Activities

- Decorate neighborhood homes for the holiday and host drive-by parades to view the decorations.
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- Plan a photo scavenger hunt, virtual costume contest or stay-in scary movie night with your family or others that you know have practiced social distancing. Limit the number of participants and enforce social distancing and mask wearing during the activity.
- Decorate pumpkins with members of your immediate family and share with others virtually.
- Participate in limited attendance, outdoor events where social distancing and mask wearing are enforced.