MEDIA ALERT

The Carbondale Emergency Task Force Urges Community Responsibility Around Halloween Celebrations; Shares Garfield County Guidelines

CARBONDALE, Colo. (October 13, 2020) – The Carbondale Emergency Task Force (CETF) is urging the community to plan for Halloween in a responsible way in order to ensure the number of COVID-19 cases does not spike through community spread. Instead of Trick or Treating this year, The CETF suggests considering following the State of Colorado and Garfield County Public Health tips on alternative ways to celebrate Halloween.

“We need to take a different approach to Halloween this year so we can safeguard our children during this COVID-19 pandemic. It would be a shame if careless Trick or Treating resulted in schools and/or businesses needing to close again, or worse yet - vulnerable people contracting COVID.” said Dan Richardson, Mayor of Carbondale. “Naturally, children are likely to a have a hard time remembering to wash their hands, keep their masks on, and practice social distancing when they are excited about Halloween candy, so we strongly urge parents and the community to consider doing it differently. That’s one reason our police officers will be handing out candy throughout the day - so that kids can have the fun with less risk.”

Safe Halloween Tips
With a little effort and creativity, there are ways to enjoy this fall tradition while protecting everyone in the community.

If you are in isolation, quarantine, have been exposed to, or are sick with COVID-19, do not participate in any in-person activities, including handing out candy.

Halloween Parties
- Indoor Halloween parties are discouraged this year.
- In some cases, it can be OK to host smaller and carefully organized events that promote safe practices like face coverings, hand washing and social distancing.
- These events should be held outdoors, which can be challenging in late October in Colorado.
- Consider projecting a Halloween movie onto the garage door. A small group or kids or families can watch as long as they are following all precautions.
- The number of people that can gather should be determined by the social distancing calculator to ensure that everyone stays 6’ apart.

Organized Church or Community Events
- Adhere to state guidance for your specific event and see the Halloween Guidance for Event Planners link.
• Carbondale Police Department will be delivering goodie bags to the community per request. Families with children 13 and younger may request goodie bags by social media messaging and calling the police department during business hours at 970-963-2662. Goodie bags will be distributed to the first 2,000 kids. In order to maintain COVID guidelines officers will be delivering goodie bags during the day.

Consider A ‘Hands-Off’ Period For Collected Candy
• Children’s Hospital experts say one of the safest things you can do is have children wait 48-72 hours before digging into Halloween candy collected trick-or-treating.
• This is because candy is coming from multiple households and mingling together in a bucket or bag.
• COVID-19 can survive up to three days on some surfaces.
• That is a long time for kids to wait, so parents should consider having a small stash of candy on hand that was purchased ahead of time for kids to enjoy immediately.

Creative Ideas
• Communicate with your neighbors to plan trick-or-treating this year.
• Find ways to hand out candy while keeping appropriate distance.
• Use a plastic slide, cardboard tubes or plastic pipes to deliver candy from a distance.
• Take kids on an outdoor, distanced treasure hunt to look for candy or Halloween items.
• Place candy at the end of a driveway or yard’s edge and watch the fun from a distance.
• Visit Children’s Hospital of Colorado’s Halloween Tips, Tricks, and Treats page.

Helpful Halloween links
• Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Halloween Tips and Tricks
• Children’s Colorado’s Tips, Tricks (and Treats) for Celebrating Halloween During the COVID-19 Pandemic
• CDC Fall holiday celebration guidance
• American Academy of Pediatrics Tips for a safe Halloween

Trick-Or-Treating Guidance
If you choose to trick-or-treat please consider the health of everyone in the community. Trick or treating outside door-to-door may seem like lower risk, but if a lot of people participate and fail to take precautions, it raises the potential for disease spread.
• Adults should trick-or-treat with kids. Most kids have difficulties remembering to social distance.
• Limit time and maintain distance at doorways.
• Wash hands and frequently-touched-surfaces often.
• Unfortunately, costume masks are not a substitute for an approved COVID-19 face covering. Just like preparing a costume that can incorporate a winter coat, plan a costume that incorporates a mask.
• Avoid crowds and crowding.
• It’s safer to gather with people who consistently wear masks, keep physical distance, and follow prevention recommendations.

(ENDS)
The Town of Carbondale established the **Carbondale Emergency Task Force (CETF)**, a collective group of volunteer and organizational expertise from across the community to provide support and guidance to the town in key areas of the potential impact from the COVID-19 global pandemic public health crisis. The community is encouraged to visit the CETF webpage and the English and Spanish language CETF Facebook pages for all public announcements and updates from the Task Force:

- [https://www.carbondalegov.org/government/emergency/](https://www.carbondalegov.org/government/emergency/)
- [https://www.facebook.com/CarbondaleETF](https://www.facebook.com/CarbondaleETF)
- [https://www.facebook.com/Grupo-de-Trabajo-de-Emergencia-de-Carbondale](https://www.facebook.com/Grupo-de-Trabajo-de-Emergencia-de-Carbondale)

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