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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Oct. 25, 2017

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Sheriff Wants Trick or Treaters to Stay Safe This Halloween

Monmouth County: Halloween is a fun time of year throughout Monmouth County and Sheriff Shaun Golden wants to keep it that way by stressing the necessary precautions to take before, during and after trick or treating.

“The safety of children is our top priority in Monmouth County,” said Sheriff Shaun Golden. “As we celebrate Halloween, it is particularly important to stress safety and good judgment to ensure that our children stay out of harm’s way while trick or treating.”

To keep trick or treaters free from danger, risk or injury on Halloween, the Monmouth County Sheriff’s Office offers the following important safety tips:

Costume Safety

- Ensure that all costumes contain fire retardant materials. Untreated costumes may catch fire when exposed to open flames from jack-o-lanterns and candles.
- Costumes should fit properly. Costumes that are too long may cause a child to trip or fall.
- Use makeup instead of a mask. Besides being hot and uncomfortable, masks often obscure vision and can cause children to trip, fall, or to not see oncoming vehicles.
- Apply reflective tape to both light and dark costumes to ensure visibility after dark.
- Props, such as swords or magic wands, should never be made out of wood or metal. Soft materials, such as cardboard, will do just as well and are much less likely to cause injury.

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Before and During Trick-or-Treat

- Map out a Trick-or-Treat route and make sure another adult has a copy. This way, you will know approximately where to find the child in the event of an emergency.
- Young children should always be accompanied by an adult.
- Older children should only Trick-or-Treat in groups, preferably led by an adult.
- At least one person per group should have a flashlight.
- Trick or treaters should only go to homes of people they know, and only those with the porch light on.
- Trick-or-Treat is safest during daylight. Leave as early as possible since fall nights become darker sooner.
- Stick to well-lit streets and stay on the sidewalks.
- Instruct children to avoid strangers and never accept a ride from someone they do not know.
- Keep children away from loose animals; there may be strays or pets frightened by the activity and costumes.
- Trick-or-Treaters should not go inside a house to accept treats.
- Never allow children to eat any candy until you are able to inspect it.
- Remind children to always look both ways before crossing the street, cross only at the crosswalks, and never hide or cross the street between parked cars.
- Set a curfew for older children to be home at a specific time.

In case of an emergency, scream for help and go to the nearest safe house for assistance.

- Dial 9-1-1 from a cell phone for emergencies.
- If you have a cell phone, in addition to your house phone, consider giving it to your child so that they can contact you in case of emergency while they are out trick or treating.
- Tell children that if someone is following them to stick together (don't split up!) and run to a lighted area and a house for help.

After Trick-or-Treat

- Always inspect candy in a well-lit area. Look for pin holes, indentations, discoloration, unusual smells, pieces of metal or glass, and pieces that look malformed.

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- Any fruit should be inspected with great care.
- If you find treats that have been tampered with or look in any way suspicious, do not eat them. Call your local police immediately. Give the suspicious treats to the responding police officer so he/she can bring them back for analysis.

The Monmouth County Sheriff's Office urges all to adhere to these important safety tips and wishes everyone a safe and happy Halloween.

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