

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Elk Rapids Village Council recommends everyone read the MDHHS press release reproduced here. Council suggests households choosing not to participate in handing out candy keep their porch light off, while those that choose to participate put their porch light on—to serve as a signal for trick-or-treaters. In the downtown River Street business district, trick-or-treaters are asked to travel one-way on sidewalks, rather than criss-crossing River Street. To view the links underlined below, visit the on-line version of the Elk Rapids News or type the following into your browser: https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-73970_71692-540429--,00.html

MDHHS makes COVID-19 recommendations about Halloween trick-or-treating, celebrations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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To help ensure the only thing scary about Halloween is the costumes, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has issued guidance on how to safely celebrate the holiday during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The way we celebrate Halloween in Michigan will be different this year due to COVID-19,” said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, chief medical executive and chief deputy for health. “However, there are still many ways to celebrate safely. The guidance MDHHS issued today provides tips for trick-or-treaters and their parents along with homeowners who wish to hand out treats.”

Tips for all groups include staying home if you are sick; maintaining social distancing of at least six feet; wearing a cloth mask that covers both the mouth and nose; and washing hands often or frequently using hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol.

In addition to the MDHHS guidance, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also issued recommendations this week. CDC considers trick-or-treating a high-risk activity and offers alternative activities to consider as well as safety tips if parents and children choose to trick-or-treat.

TIPS FOR TRICK-OR-TREATERS AND PARENTS:

- Share with your children that this year may be different than last but let them know some of the new ways you plan to celebrate and still have lots of fun.
- Talk with children about safety and social distancing guidelines and expectations. Keep a six-foot distance from others not in your group.
- Participate in one-way trick-or-treating and guide children to stay to the right to ensure social distancing.
- Trick or treat with people you live with.
- Avoid congregating in groups around houses.
- Wear a face mask covering both mouth and nose.
 - A costume mask (such as for Halloween) is not a substitute for a cloth mask.
 - Do not wear a costume mask over a protective cloth mask if wearing both causes difficulty breathing. Instead, consider using a Halloween-themed cloth mask.
- Only go to houses with safety measures in place.
- Check out halloween2020.org to find exciting activities and ways to celebrate Halloween this year based on levels of COVID risks in your area.

TIPS FOR HOMEOWNERS:

- Use duct tape to mark six-foot lines in front of home and leading to driveway/front door.
- Position a distribution table between yourself and trick-or-treaters.
- Distribute candy on a disinfected table to eliminate direct contact.
- Consider handing out candy in an open space where distancing is possible, rather than from the front door.
- Consider a neighborhood costume parade; it is an easy way to keep safe space between children.

The guidance also urges Michiganders to consider hosting virtual parties instead of in-person Halloween gatherings. If a gathering is hosted, it should be limited to 10 people or less per Executive Order 2020-176, social distancing should be maintained, cloth masks should be worn and food and party favors should be set out individually to prevent cross contamination.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at Michigan.gov/Coronavirus and CDC.gov/Coronavirus.