

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Halloween makes it more than spooky on the road
Safety tips for motorists and pedestrians

From Texas A&M Agrilife
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Halloween is tomorrow, and children will be out and about to enjoy treats, fun and games. Motorists and pedestrians can take steps to make this year's Halloween a safe one.

Although Halloween comes before the change back to standard time this year, the days are getting shorter, and the nights are getting longer, which means more night driving.

Sadly, Halloween also increases the number of drunk drivers on the road at night. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reporting 42 percent of those killed in traffic crashes on Halloween night from 2013 to 2017 died in crashes involving a drunk driver.

NHTSA also reports that nearly two-thirds of all fatal pedestrian crashes occur in low-light conditions. The large number of young pedestrians out on Halloween evening makes this an especially dangerous time.

Here is a scary fact from the National Safety Council, children are more than twice as likely to be hit by a car and killed on Halloween than on any other day of the year.

That's why Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Family and Community Health County Extension Agent Stacy Drury, Bandera County reminds motorists, parents and children of the following safety tips to keep in mind during Halloween and all year long.

Tips for Motorists

- Avoid using handheld electronic devices.

- Remember that as soon as you step out of your car, you become a pedestrian.
- Be especially alert for all road users, including pedestrians, at night.
- Slowdown in areas where pedestrians are likely to be or where sight distances are limited. Keep your windshield clean. Watch for children walking on roads, medians, and curbs. Enter and exit driveways carefully
- Be especially alert for children darting out from between parked vehicles and from behind bushes and shrubs. They're excited – and they are not paying attention.
- Never drink and drive – tonight or any night. If you are partying, designate a driver.
- If you see a drunk driver or impaired pedestrian on the road, contact local law enforcement.

Tips for Parents

- Adults should accompany children at all times and supervise their “trick or treat” activities.
- Teach children to “stop, look left-right-left, and listen” before they cross the street.
- Use a flashlight, and wear retro-reflective strips or patches on your clothing or costume to be more visible to motorists.
- Be certain that the mask does not obstruct vision or hearing.
- Ensure that costumes do not impede walking or driving ability.

Tips for Pedestrians (children and adults)

- Before crossing a street, stop at the curb or edge of the road and look left, right, and left again to be sure no cars are coming. Continue to check for traffic while on the street.
- Walk – never run – from house to house or across the road.
- Cross the street only at intersections and crosswalks.
- When crossing at an intersection with a traffic light, be sure to watch for turning cars. Obey all pedestrian signals.
- Walk on sidewalks whenever possible. If there are no sidewalks, walk on the left side of the street facing traffic.

By taking some extra time to make sure drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists obey the rules, Halloween can be a safe time for all.