



COSTUME FLAMMABILITY INFORMATION

Monsters and princesses and super heroes, oh my...choosing a Halloween costume is just plain fun! The Halloween Industry Association (HIA) wants it to be a safe holiday too and offers tips to ensure fire safety. Costume flammability has received increased attention over the past few years. HIA encourages parents to purchase flame retardant costumes to protect their children.

When Shopping for Costumes

Become an informed consumer by checking labels and knowing your materials. Look for costumes, beards and wigs labeled "Flame-Resistant" -- nylon or heavyweight polyester costumes are best. Cotton and cotton-blend fabrics will catch fire and burn more quickly than most synthetics. If the costume specifically states that it is "flame-retardant" on the package or the label, it is made of materials that inhibit or resist the spread of fire. HIA highly recommends that in addition to purchasing flame retardant costumes, parents also review the *Stop-Drop-Roll* burn prevention. All costumes can burn when exposed to an open flame or other fire sources.

If the package says "keep away from flame" or offers no warning or guarantee, it should be assumed that the costume's material is flammable, and is not appropriate for a child.

If you plan to make a costume, use flame proof materials, treat with a flame retardant fabric spray, or use the following flame retardant solution recommended by fire departments:

Wash material and mix the following:

4 oz. Boric acid

9 oz. Borax

Dissolve in one gallon warm water

Soak costume, let drip dry

While the incidence of costumes catching fire is low, it does happen, and common sense should be used during Halloween festivities.

Other Factors to Consider

Keeping safe means being conscious of the environment. Trick or treat bags, paper accessories and extra long costumes are also quick burners and conduits for disaster. Since they are carried close to the ground, they can easily come into contact with candles and other open flames.

Whether strolling through the neighborhood or celebrating at home, parents should keep a close eye on trick or treaters when lit candles are present. In the home, candles should be placed out of the reach of children. When outside, children should be warned to keep within a safe distance of open flames.

With attention to detail, Halloween will be fun and safe for all.