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Hallowe?en ? the tradition, the trickery and the treats

How fabulous is it that Hallowe'en falls on a Friday night this year! With all the excitement of the season, it's easy to forget that this holiday can also be a time of great danger for children, pets and adults alike.

Here are some great safety tips and general Hallowe'en facts to help keep you safe this Friday night:

? Hydro One says: As Hallowe'en approaches, beware of the phantom power lurking in your home that could be making your electricity bills creep higher. Also known as standby power, phantom power is energy consumption that is being drawn by many household gadgets, electronic devices and appliances while they are switched off, but plugged in. Up to 20 per cent of your household electricity consumption could be caused by phantom power.

Here are five tips from Hydro One to reduce energy consumption and the amount of phantom power being used in your home:

1. The most effective way to eliminate standby power loss is to unplug your devices when they are not in use.
2. An easy way to turn your electronic devices off is to plug all electronics into a power bar that can be easily switched off.
3. Look for the ENERGY STAR® label whenever you buy new electronics or appliances. ENERGY STAR® identifies the most energy efficient products, which reduce energy use, even in standby mode.
4. Unplug battery chargers as soon as the device is fully charged or when the charger is not being used
5. Too many clocks in the kitchen? Appliances with clocks use electricity when not in use. When purchasing new appliances, look for ones without a clock feature.

If you have pay-tv services, you may want to keep your cable television converter powered up at all times, otherwise you risk rebooting problems.

For more tips on reducing your electricity use, visit www.HydroOne.com/saveenergy

? What do teal pumpkins mean on Hallowe'en? Hallowe'en is supposed to be scary, but for kids with food allergies it can be scarier than usual. Finding treats that won't potentially trigger allergic reactions can be tricky. That's why Food Allergy Research & Education, or FARE, is trying to start a new tradition in the spirit of inclusion and safety.

The Teal Pumpkin Project encourages people to paint a pumpkin teal, the color of food allergy awareness, to indicate that their home is safe for trick-or-treaters with food allergies and offering non-food treats such as small toys.

According to FARE, food allergies affect 1 in every 13 children or roughly two in every classroom. That's a lot of kids who might feel left out of the festivities. If you would like to participate in the Teal Pumpkin Project this Hallowe'en, you can visit FARE's website to download a free poster and get ideas of non-food treats to hand out to kids with food allergies.

? 10 random Hallowe'en facts:

1. Because the movie Hallowe'en (1978) was on such a tight budget, they had to use the cheapest mask they could find for the character Michael Meyers, which turned out to be a William Shatner's Star Trek mask. Shatner initially didn't know the mask was in his likeness, but when he found out years later, he said he was honored.
2. The first Jack O'Lanterns were actually made from turnips.
3. Hallowe'en is the second highest grossing commercial holiday after Christmas.
4. An intense and persistent fear of Hallowe'en is called Samhnainophobia Samhainophobia is the fear of Hallowe'en.
5. Black and orange are typically associated with Hallowe'en. Orange is a symbol of strength and endurance and, along with brown and gold, stands for the harvest and autumn. Black is typically a symbol of death and darkness and acts as a reminder that Hallowe'en once was a festival that marked the boundaries between life and death.
6. Hallowe'en originated in Ireland over 2,000 years ago Ireland is typically believed to be the birthplace of Hallowe'en.
7. Harry Houdini (1874-1926) was one of the most famous and mysterious magicians who ever lived. Strangely enough, he died in 1926 on Hallowe'en night as a result of appendicitis brought on by three stomach punches.
8. Hallowe'en is thought to have originated around 4000 B.C., which means Hallowe'en has been around for over 6,000 years.
9. Both Salem, Massachusetts, and Anoka, Minnesota, are the self-proclaimed Hallowe'en capitals of the world.
10. Boston, Massachusetts, holds the record for the most Jack O'Lanterns lit at once (30,128).

By Wendy Gabrek