



## County of Sacramento

**For Immediate Release**

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### ***NEWS RELEASE***

## **Halloween Food Safety Tips**

Halloween is a fun time for children to trick-or-treat in their costumes. It is also a favorite time for parties and potlucks. The Sacramento County Department of Environmental Management, Division of Environmental Health, offers the following food safety tips to ensure your children and party guests have a safe and enjoyable Halloween.

### **Tips for parents before Trick-or-Treat**

- Give your children a healthy snack or light meal before going out so they will not be tempted to eat their treats before you can inspect them.
- Tell children to wait until they get home so you can check their goodies before they eat any.

### **Trick-or-Treating food safety tips**

- Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Discard homemade goodies unless you know the cook well.
- Inspect factory-wrapped treats for signs of tampering, such as an unusual appearance of discoloration, tiny pinholes, or tears in wrappers. Throw away anything that looks suspicious.
- Parents of very young children should remove any choking hazards such as gum, nuts, hard candies or small toys. Parents of children with food allergies need to take extra caution and read food labels.

### **Consider alternate treats to give**

- Packages of low-fat crackers with cheese or peanut butter
- Mini boxes of raisins
- Packages of hot chocolate mix
- Microwaveable popcorn
- Non-food items like stickers, book markers, coloring books, and crayons

### **Halloween party food safety tips**

- If food is catered, make sure you are working with a reputable caterer and have properly working chafing dishes to keep hot food hot. Keep hot foods hot at a safe temperature of 135° F or above.
- Keep cold foods cold. Make sure there is plenty of room in your refrigerator to store cold foods before, during, and after the party. The refrigerator should hold foods at 41° F or cooler to prevent bacterial growth.
- Fresh fruits and vegetables should be washed well before serving.
- If juice or cider is served to children at Halloween parties, make sure it is pasteurized or otherwise treated to destroy harmful bacteria. The label will state if the juice or cider has been treated.

For more information on Halloween health and safety tips, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [www.cdc.gov/family/halloween](http://www.cdc.gov/family/halloween).

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