

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Kansas Department of Corrections Helps Promote a Safe Halloween Parole staff increases supervision of paroled sex offenders during Halloween

Kansas Department of Corrections parole staff has heightened supervision of paroled sex offenders through the Halloween season as Kansas children prepare to go trick-or-treating.

Parole staff will make unannounced visits to sex offenders' homes in the days leading up to and throughout Halloween. Officers also will meet with offenders to review special conditions imposed during the Halloween season, such as prohibiting the handing out of candy or the displaying of Halloween decorations.

"National data indicates that incidents where a child has been victimized by a sex offender while participating in traditional Halloween activities are extremely rare. To the best of our knowledge, we have not experienced such an incident involving a sex offender under parole supervision and a child during Halloween," Corrections Secretary Roger Werholtz said.

"The Department of Corrections realizes that parents are the primary source to promote a safe Halloween. However, we impose these special conditions during this time of year to give Kansans added assurance as trick-or-treaters go door to door in our neighborhoods."

Sex offenders currently under supervision must comply with the special conditions or face sanctions and possible jail time. Among the restrictions imposed, offenders must:

- not possess items that would entice children under the age of eighteen;
- not leave candy or treats on the front porch or elsewhere on their property;
- not be at a residence where candy is being passed out to minor children;
- turn off all lights on their front porch and garage area;
- not answer the door to anyone other than an adult family member, adult friend or emergency personnel;
- not answer the door under any circumstances for a minor child;
- not have contact or attempt contact with children without the permission of the parole officer; and,
- not take walks in their neighborhood on Halloween.

In addition, each parole office has developed a plan which addresses the case management issues of its offenders. For example, certain offenders supervised by the Olathe Parole Office have developed individualized Halloween Safety Plans while high-risk offenders identified by the Topeka Parole Office will be required to report to the parole office Halloween night.

The Department of Corrections, which has taken similar increased measures in previous years, encourages parents to review Halloween safety tips with their children. Parents also are urged to notify local law enforcement of any unusual activity.

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