

**Scott Walker**  
Governor

**Jon Litscher**  
Secretary



## State of Wisconsin Department of Corrections

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Mailing Address

3099 E. Washington Ave.  
Post Office Box 7925  
Madison, WI 53707-7925  
Telephone (608) 240-5000  
Fax (608) 240-3300

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: DOC Communications, 608-240-5060

[DOCPublicInformationOffice@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DOCPublicInformationOffice@wisconsin.gov)

### Department of Corrections and Law Enforcement Agencies Collaborate in Joint Operation to Keep Children Safe on Halloween

MADISON - The Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) is working with local law enforcement agencies across the state to keep children safe during Halloween trick or treat activities. Registered sex offenders on active community supervision have been made aware of restrictions that prohibit them from participating in any Halloween or trick or treat activities.

These restrictions include:

- Having any Halloween decorations, either inside or outside their residence;
- Handing out candy or participating in trick or treat activities;
- Wearing a Halloween costume; or
- Turning on their porch light during trick or treating hours.

DOC Probation and Parole agents and local law enforcement will be conducting random home visits during local trick or treating hours in communities across Wisconsin. Failure by a sex offender to comply with these restrictions may result in them being taken into custody.

Grace Knutson, DOC's Sex Offender Registry Director, also shared the following common-sense tips for safe trick or treating:

- Children should always be accompanied by a parent or trusted adult.
- Stay on well-lit streets and stick to neighborhoods you know well.
- Only stop at homes with a lit porch light.
- Never enter a home or car for a treat.
- Carry a cell phone for quick communication.
- Call 911 if you see any suspicious or unlawful activity.
- Children should yell "No!" and try to escape if a stranger tries to take them somewhere.
- Have a responsible adult check treats at the end of the night.

Before trick or treating, parents are encouraged to sit down with their children to discuss these tips and develop a strategy if families get separated.

The Wisconsin Sex Offender Registry website is available at <http://offender.doc.state.wi.us/public/>. The registry enables users to search for a specific offender, search for offenders up to 3 miles from a specific address, or search for all offenders in a certain municipality, ZIP code, or county. Members of the public can also contact the Sex Offender Registry program at 1-877-234-0085 with questions or to report potential violations of Halloween restrictions.

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**NOTE TO MEDIA:** Media outlets who wish to participate in offender home visits with DOC Probation and Parole agents must e-mail [DOCPublicInformationOffice@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DOCPublicInformationOffice@wisconsin.gov) with the following information by the end of the day on Tuesday, October 25<sup>th</sup>:

1. First and last name(s) and mobile phone numbers of individuals from the media outlet who will be participating;
2. Name of the media outlet; and
3. 2-3 municipalities where you wish to participate in home visits, including the date and time you are available during trick or treating hours.

Grace Knutson, Wisconsin's Sex Offender Registry Program Director, will be available for media interviews at DOC's headquarters in Madison on Wednesday, October 26<sup>th</sup>. Please e-mail [DOCPublicInformationOffice@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DOCPublicInformationOffice@wisconsin.gov) by the end of the day on Tuesday, October 25<sup>th</sup> if you wish to interview Ms. Knutson.

New this year is a social media graphic which has been included with this press release. Media outlets are free to use the graphic as long as it is not edited or altered.

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