

# NEWS RELEASE

Indiana Criminal Justice Institute



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Governor's Council Reminds Hoosiers to Avoid "Dead Zones" This Halloween**

**Indianapolis, IN.** – Research from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) indicates that Halloween is the second deadliest day of the year for pedestrians in the United States. That is why the Governor's Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving is urging all motorists in the Hoosier state to be aware of pedestrian traffic and avoid distracted and impaired driving during the Halloween holiday weekend.

During the 2008 Halloween holiday period in Indiana (Thursday, Oct. 30, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. to Monday, Nov. 3, 2008 at 5:59 a.m.), there were 16 collisions involving pedestrians, all of them resulting in injuries with two leading to fatalities. Nearly half of the injuries sustained during this time frame occurred on Halloween night. Not surprisingly, most involved children under the age of 18.

"The most dangerous time of day for pedestrians is between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m., and the deadliest day of the week is Saturday. With Halloween falling on Saturday this year, it could create the perfect storm for pedestrian injuries and fatalities in Indiana," said Neil Moore, executive director of the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI). "We should use what we know about pedestrian safety to help keep our children and loved ones safe this Halloween weekend."

Dimly lit roadways and dark costumes can make trick-or-treaters and partygoers on foot difficult to see. Pedestrians are urged to exercise caution by staying alert, carrying a flashlight and using crosswalks and sidewalks whenever possible. Exercising good judgment may save someone's life.

NHTSA data also shows that Halloween is a particularly deadly night due to drunk drivers. In 2008, 58 percent of all Halloween night roadway fatalities nationwide involved a driver or a motorcycle rider over the legal limit.

*-more-*

**"Safe Halloween"**

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**Executive Director, T. Neil Moore**

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Adult partygoers are urged to celebrate responsibly by designating a sober driver before parties begin. In 2008, Indiana reported 1,947 collisions and 13 fatalities during the five day Halloween holiday period.

By following these simple steps, motorists can ensure a safer Halloween for all Hoosiers:

- Remove costumes that can restrict your vision when driving;
- Watch for pedestrians on roadways and at intersections;
- If you plan to consume alcohol, designate a sober driver and give that person your keys;
- If you become impaired, don't get behind the wheel - use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation to get home safely; and
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, dial 911.

*The Governor's Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving serves as the public opinion catalyst for statewide action to reduce death and injury on Indiana roadways. The Council provides ongoing support to state and local traffic safety advocates.*

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