

Town of Middlebury
Emergency Management Bulletin
October 30, 2020

Halloween!

Remember the lessons from the Central Vermont outbreak this month- social gatherings with no masks and no social distancing- what the heck, everyone knew each other, right? -fellow hockey players and social relations! It wasn't forechecking or back checking that spread the virus, it was those in congregate social activities before and after. Keep this in mind this Halloween. The following are re-prints from our bulletins since October 9:

Fun Activity – and Safe, Too!

https://experiencemiddlebury.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/spooktacular_2020_v5.pdf

Drive-Through trick or treating – brought to you by the Better Middlebury Partnership with support from Shaws and Addison Home Health and Hospice! Candy Stations will be at 20 Locations around town-- an updated list of locations and information on the event is available at the link above. Families are asked not to exit their vehicles; pre-bagged candy will be passed to them through the window by volunteers. *Halloween Night, 4-7pm*

And For Those Participating in the Traditional Trick-or-Treating

VDH Provides Their Take on Halloween

Halloween may look a little different this year, but we can still find ways to celebrate safely. Please be sure to stay home if you or anyone in your family is sick. Making these three things a part of your Halloween plans will make everyone safer:

6-foot Spaces

Keep a safe 6-foot distance between your family and other people who don't live in your household. Bring a flashlight so you're visible in the dark. You can get creative if you're giving out candy. Need ideas? Have bags ready to grab on your front steps or slide the treats down a "candy slide!"

Masks on Faces

Make sure you and your family are wearing a face mask or covering when you go out. Find a fun way to make it part of your costume. But don't wear a costume mask over your face mask, which could make it harder to breathe.

Uncrowded Places

Keep your group small and skip crowded indoor parties. If you're trick-or-treating, and one street or neighborhood seems too busy, move on to the next one.

Halloween Brochure from New York State

Dr. Benvenuto at Porter found this great flyer from NY State on having a COVID-19 Safe Halloween. What the heck, we used to be part of New York State in days of yore. There's a lot of good information in it so we've placed a direct link to the flyer here:

https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/10/13244_covid_halloweenguidance_102020-2.pdf

And from Our District Health Office

Talk about a Halloween Treat! Here Bethany Yon from the Health Department treats us to some tips on how to have a COVID-safe Halloween! (Thanks to Moira Cook at the local District Office for sending this long!)

https://youtu.be/hSgQHP_eCil

And Finally, If All That Isn't Enough...

If you decide to participate in the traditional door-door Halloween, take a minute to read the CDC information on how the disease is spread and take counter measures.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>

Some counter measures:

- Control gathering points to avoid congestion (like front stoops or decks).
- Keep groups small
- Carry hand sanitizer and don't be afraid to use it
- Wear face coverings- no, that old plastic Howdy Doody mask with the rubber band on it from the attic won't suffice. This is a time for some fun initiatives on costume design.
- Accept only industry sealed treats
- Kids- don't sneak open the "fun size" (who came up with THAT name?) Hershey bar to munch on. Wait till you get home and a parent can sanitize the packaging first. After all, you really don't know where that candy bar has been.
- Wipe down the bags of candy before you open them for distribution- remember, they sat in a store – see airborne aerosols. Pretty remote chance for transmission but why take a chance?
- Wear nitrile or similar hand covering when giving out candy.
- Avoid the big bowl that can be rummaged through.
- Only go to homes that have a "welcome" light on
- Never go into someone else's home

Nothing overly complex here. Let's keep the marauding hobgoblins from being part of community transmission.

COVID Report

With regrets at putting a din on Halloween, case growth numbers are rather staggering. The virus is out there and continues to grow unabated against the unwary. Here's the case growth numbers for the past week:

CT +4,256; MA +7,557; ME +407; NH +724; NY- +13,839;; RI +2,821; VT +154. Daily case growth in Vermont in the past week averages about 22 new cases a day. As of October 29, 6 patients are hospitalized.

It turns out the two major outbreaks in Vermont are related and were based on mobility between infected people, failing to quarantine, no masks, etc. The Central VT outbreak spread to St Micheal's, involved over 470 exposure contacts and 19 other locations in a couple of counties. Beware the COVID bug - invisible, insidious!

Vermont Department of Health Statement on Outage Experienced by the University of Vermont Health Network

The Vermont Department of Health is aware of the challenges being faced by our partners at the University of Vermont Medical Center and throughout the UVM Health Network.

COVID-19 testing and reporting is our first priority. Vermonters can continue to receive COVID-19 testing through Health Department-led clinics. However, results reported through the UVMHC system will be impacted. The Health Department Laboratory is stepping up to fill gaps, and we are contacting our other lab partners for options to ensure that testing and reporting of results can continue smoothly.

Town Services Update

There have not been any interruptions to Town services due to absenteeism from COVID. The Police Department continues to operate at full service 24 X 7 and remains COVID free.

Midd College Announces Spring Schedule Update

Re-affirming their commitment to a safe campus, and thus a safe community, Midd announces the spring schedule including mandatory quarantine and testing for students. Feb 7-8 pre-arrival quarantine begins; Feb 21-22 "Day 0" COVID testing; Feb 24 spring term begins after "Day 7" testing. All protocols remain in place. You can find the announcement here:

<https://www.middlebury.edu/office/midd2021/announcements/spring-semester-date-changes>.