

## **Make Halloween the right kind of scary**

Halloween, the annual celebration of all things scary, loved by children and adults alike. Whether dressing up to go 'trick-or-treating', or heading to a ghoulish fancy dress party, costumes play a huge part in the festivities. But while frights might be on the menu, it's important you stay safe on Halloween.

The Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) is working with the Office for Product Safety and Standards on a campaign to raise public awareness of the dangers surrounding Halloween costumes.

The campaign will inform consumers of the need to buy fancy dress and Halloween costumes from legitimate sources, and check costumes carry appropriate safety labels. Consumers must be aware of the potential dangers that come with fancy dress clothing, especially involving children and open flames, to avoid facing real horror.

The Office for Product Safety and Standards has issued the following guidance to keep consumers safe this Halloween:

### **Make sure costumes comply to safety standards**

It's important to check that any costume – particularly those for children – meets safety standards. Does the costume have a CE mark, signifying the manufacturer's guarantee that the products are safe?

When shopping online, buy from a legitimate, UK source, to ensure that the products comply with domestic safety standards. Check there are no active product recalls on the costumes before you purchase them.

### **Beware of counterfeits**

Counterfeit costumes are often made with sub-standard materials that do not comply to safety procedures and put the wearer at risk. Always buy your costumes from legitimate sources.

Vice President at Rubie's Masquerade Co. UK Ltd, Chris Isitt, said: "We take great pride in our intellectual property rights and that of our licensors and have a zero-tolerance approach when it comes to the sale of counterfeit costumes. [We work] around the clock to detect and investigate rogue traders prior to implementing a variety of enforcement initiatives."

The Anti-Piracy team at Rubie's Masquerade have provided some tips on how to steer clear of purchasing counterfeit costumes online:

- If it's too good to be true then it probably is. Genuine costumes are rarely discounted, do not be fooled into thinking you are getting a good deal. Fake costumes retail for as little as £3.99 on auction sites.
- Spelling mistakes or grammatical errors are a huge giveaway. Traders try to deceive consumers by making slight alternations to well-known brand names.
- Make sure that the seller address and item location match. If a listing claims to have 'UK Stock' but then provides an overseas business address or no address at all be wary.

### **Stay away from naked flames**

CTSI Lead Officer for Product Safety, Robert Chantry-Price, said "Consumers should take care when using candles and naked flames. Store-bought and homemade costumes may not be flame retardant and could result in serious injury, which has happened in a number of high-profile cases in recent years.

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Keep yourself and your children safe this Halloween by following the advice given by CTSI and the Office for Product Safety and Standards. For more information, visit <https://www.tradingstandards.uk/news-policy/campaigns/halloween-costume-safety-campaign>.

Stay safe, stay spooky.

**END**

**Notes for Editors:**

For press queries, email CTSI Press Office: [pressoffice@tsi.org.uk](mailto:pressoffice@tsi.org.uk), or call 01268 582240.

Halloween campaign hub: <https://www.tradingstandards.uk/news-policy/campaigns/halloween-costume-safety-campaign>

Businesses looking for free and impartial regulatory advice on product safety can visit: <https://www.businesscompanion.info/en/quick-guides/product-safety>

**Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)**

The Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) is a training and membership organisation that has represented the interests of the trading standards profession since 1881, both nationally and internationally. It aims to raise the profile of the profession while working towards a safer, fairer, and better-informed society for consumers and businesses. CTSI's members deliver frontline trading standards services in local authorities. [www.tradingstandards.uk](http://www.tradingstandards.uk).

**The Office for Product Safety and Standards**

The Office for Product Safety and Standards was created in January 2018 by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, to enhance protections for consumers and the environment and drive increased productivity, growth and business confidence.

Office for Product Safety and Standards is part of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

**Rubie's Masquerade Co.**

Rubie's Masquerade Co. is the world's largest manufacturer and distributor of fancy dress and accessories. Visit: <https://www.rubiesuk.com/>