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DATE: October 13, 2020
TO: Bill Siebers, Chair of Safety & Licensing
FROM: Kurt Eggebrecht, Health Officer, Appleton Health Department
RE: Halloween Trick or Treating 2020

I am writing to clarify the Health Department's guidance for celebrating Halloween safety during a pandemic.

First, it should be noted that the Common Council has historically set the hours for trick or treating within the City to be on Halloween from 4 to 8pm. Until last Wednesday, when a resolution proposing to change these hours was introduced, we were operating with the understanding that the hours would remain the same as they had in the past.

Given the high rate of COVID-19 cases in Appleton we, along with other health departments in the region, wanted to provide guidance that reduces the risk of contracting COVID-19. Knowing that families may proceed in a traditional manner, we wanted to provide advice that reinforces that **trick or treating, in its traditional sense, should not take place.**

As a result, our guidance suggests that high risk individuals (people over 60 or those with underlying health conditions that puts them in a "high risk" category such as, obesity, hypertension, etc.) should not participate this year and leave their porch light off. Similarly, we recommend that if you are sick at any age, you should not participate.

We advise that you trick or treat only with your household members and do not join with other households or co-mingle children while participating. They should also properly wear face coverings, social distance and use hand sanitizer frequently.

We also advise not to hand out candy in the traditional manner, rather offer ready to grab goodies bags or spread out candy on a table for children to grab and go.

We offered additional guidance including avoiding nursing homes and other high-risk indoor settings.

We promoted these precautions rather than just saying no to Halloween. Limiting trick or treating to just family household members, takes a balanced approach which also addresses the mental health needs of our children and families.

While it is true that this proposed resolution and staying home is the safest approach to preventing the spread of COVID-19, we also recognize that traveling to another community to trick or treat has the potential to create greater risk. We felt our approach struck the right balance.