This year, an estimated 179 million people in the U.S. are expected to celebrate Halloween – with families and children across the country taking to the streets to go trick-or-treating. But have you ever thought about what goes into making sure our children have fun and stay safe? From costumes to glow sticks, food to flashlights, petrochemicals play a key role in making Halloween the fun family night that we all take for granted. Petrochemicals are the building blocks for millions of products we use every day, and will likely form the costumes and safety features that more than 43 million of us will use when taking the kids trick-or-treating this year.

PETROCHEMICALS
How do Petrochemicals Help to Make Your Holiday Safe and Fun?

To begin, no Halloween costume is complete without a scary mask, which are often made either of PVC or EVA – both of which are made out of ethylene. Carrying a broom or a sword? These and many other props are made from plastic, latex or polystyrene, all of which are derived from petrochemicals. Halloween costumes are usually made out of polyester, as are some of the fun and fancy wigs worn by many revelers. Polypropylene is also often used for wigs. Thanks to these materials, costumes these days are also flame resistant. More important, are the safety aspects that petrochemicals bring to Halloween. Glow sticks are fun, inexpensive and beneficial, as they help drivers better see the children running around the streets that night. And, they are also made from petrochemicals – ethylene is once again the building block for their outer casings, while the magic glowing liquid inside is a substance called trichlorophenyl oxalate. Flashlights also ensure kids are seen as well as heard, and their casings, wires and circuits are all made out of petrochemicals. Finally, we move to the most important thing for kids on Halloween -- candy. To ensure it stays clean and fresh, candy packaging is usually made out of polypropylene. Although it is merely an annoyance that stands in the way of the kids and their treats, for adults it represents peace of mind as an extra barrier against dirt and germs. As AFPM President Chet Thompson said recently, “Many people don’t stop to think about how petrochemicals have become an integral part of their lives, but we literally depend on them every day, including on Halloween.” Petrochemicals are the building blocks of modern life, and no day is this more obvious than on Halloween. To learn more, check out our Halloween infographic.

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