



KAY IVEY
GOVERNOR

ALABAMA LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

201 SOUTH UNION STREET, SUITE 300 | P.O. BOX 304115 | MONTGOMERY, AL 36130-4115
PHONE 334.676.6000 | WWW.ALEA.GOV



HAL TAYLOR
SECRETARY

PRESS STATEMENT
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‘Children’s Safety First, Halloween Fun Second’ Safety Initiative

ALEA’s SBI Warns of Drugs Cloned to Look Like Candy

MONTGOMERY – As the weather continues to change and autumn creeps upon us, the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) would like to wish everyone a happy and safe Halloween. This time of year can be filled with fun and excitement for your entire family; however, it can also pose a variety of potential threats and hazards. To help bring awareness to this issue, our Agency developed the “Children’s Safety First, Halloween Fun Second” safety initiative, which comprises several important reminders and tips to ensure the safety of all your ghouls and goblins as they enjoy Halloween festivities across the state.

“As your children trick-or-treat or enjoy ghostly festivities, we would like to remind citizens it is important to be aware of your surroundings and verify the candy they receive is safe to eat,” ALEA Secretary Hal Taylor said. “In years past, there have been many warnings surrounding poisoned candy or candy with sharp objects inside. However, this year, there are growing concerns across the nation over a new and extremely dangerous substance that could be lurking inside your child’s Halloween bucket: fentanyl.”

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is 50 times more potent than heroin and 100 times more potent than morphine. It is being pressed into fake pills or cut into heroin, cocaine, and other street drugs to drive addiction. According to the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), two milligrams of fentanyl, which is equal to 10-15 grains of table salt, is considered a lethal dose.

Since August 2022, the DEA and its law enforcement partners have discovered brightly colored fentanyl and fentanyl pills, nicknamed “[rainbow fentanyl](#)” in 26 states. The DEA recently stated that this is “a deliberate effort by drug traffickers to drive addiction amongst kids and young adults.”

ALEA’s State Bureau of Investigation Director Chris Inabinett said, “Please understand there is no intelligence or evidence that suggests rainbow fentanyl will be given freely to children during Halloween in Alabama. However, the rise in fentanyl seizures is extremely concerning, and we want to bring awareness and educate the public in our state regarding this deadly drug. In fact, SBI Special Agents saw fentanyl seizures increase at a rate of 59 percent in fiscal year 2022 as compared to fiscal year 2021.”

Fentanyl use can cause confusion, drowsiness, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, changes in pupil size, cold and clammy skin, coma, and respiratory failure eventually leading to death.

If you suspect that you or a loved one has been exposed to fentanyl, you should dial 911 and seek emergency medical help immediately. Administer naloxone (Narcan) if available, and do not leave the individual alone. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth and wash your hands with soap and water to remove any of the substance that may have come in contact with your skin.

In addition to bringing awareness to this deadly drug, ALEA also offers the following safety tips this Halloween:

- **Trick-or-treat with trusted neighbors.** Plan your route ahead of time and find the safest, most efficient route to the candy. We also recommend checking our Agency's sex offender registry to make sure your children are visiting safe houses. To see where sex offenders live in your area, [CLICK HERE](#).
- **Dress to impress, safely.** Make sure costumes, candy bags and/or pails are reflective. Costumes shouldn't drag too far on the ground to avoid tripping, and masks, hats, and shoes should be well-fitting.
- **Watch for kids.** If you plan to drive during trick-or-treat hours, watch for children walking on roadways, medians, or curbs. Be sure to enter and exit driveways carefully.
- **Stay on the path.** Don't stray from the well-marked routes to get to the candy. Always use the sidewalk, and do not cut across yards or use alleys. Wherever possible, cross the road at a crosswalk.
- **When in doubt, throw the candy out.** Avoid candy that has loose wrappings, is completely unwrapped, has puncture holes, or is homemade and not factory wrapped.
- **Never enter a stranger's home or vehicle for treats.** Do not allow your children to go inside an individual's home or vehicle for the purpose of getting candy or a treat.