

# HOLMES MURPHY

## SERVICES FOR FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

**Our team at Holmes Murphy is dedicated to serving fraternal organizations and their members.**

### PREVENTION EDUCATION ADVISORY | HAUNTED HOUSES

According to The Halloween Advertising Agency, Halloween is the second biggest shopping holiday for retailers, generating more than \$6 billion in sales. It is the third largest party occasion, after New Year's Eve and the Super Bowl, and the popularity of the holiday can be seen on campus as well. Halloween parties that include haunted houses are becoming more commonplace, and while they can be a lot of fun, safety is an issue that cannot be ignored. Before planning such an event, be sure to contact your Inter/National Headquarters to make sure haunted houses are permitted and to obtain special event insurance if that is necessary.

The biggest concern for a haunted house held in a building is fire. There are steps that can be taken to minimize the risk of fire in a haunted house. Make sure all props and decorations are as flame-proof as possible. Don't use Styrofoam, foam rubber, or plastic sheeting. Do not use candles in your haunted house, and make sure that no one smokes inside. Provide enough light that guests do not feel the need to use lighters to see. Plan your layout around electrical outlets to minimize the use of extension cords. If you must use one, make sure it is heavy-duty and grounded, and make sure it is taped down securely to prevent trips and falls.

Adequate egress can also decrease the risks of your haunted house. Make sure that there are two lighted exits on opposite sides of the haunted house. The exit doors should swing out, and should have either a non-latching handle or a panic bar. Fire resistant directional signs that can be placed throughout your haunted house are also a good idea.

Be in contact with the Fire Marshall and any other local authority with jurisdiction over your haunted house. They will be able to assist you in making your haunted house safely scary. It is also a good idea to practice emergency situations: getting help for someone who is having a medical emergency, evacuating the crowd in a fire. Other good safety tips for haunted houses can be found here: <http://www.hauntedhouse.com/safety/> and here: <http://www.salvilaw.com/blog/2014/10/haunted-house-injury-risks-arent-scary-youre-prepared/>

Happy Haunting!



Holmes Murphy offers this educational information to provoke thought and discussion and it should not be viewed as a mandate or requirement.

We view part of our role as an insurance and risk management professional to anticipate your needs and educate you in an effort to complement the organization's loss prevention and control efforts, not replace the decision making autonomy of our client organizations. We hope you find this educational piece to be of value and stand ready to discuss it further with you or any of your constituents.