

La. parish bans Halloween on Sunday

by [Bruce Nolan](#)

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NEW ORLEANS (RNS) Some families may be debating whether to send kids out to trick-or-treat on Sunday night, but there's no debate in Louisiana's Livingston Parish, where local laws forbid the observance of Halloween on a Sunday.

This year, for the first time, in unincorporated parts of the parish of 120,000, Halloween is on Monday, Nov. 1. Trick-or-treating hours are 6 to 8 p.m. on the prescribed day, and violators risk a fine of up to \$500 or up to 30 days in jail.

A number of parish officials were unavailable for comment, but news accounts indicate that for years parish authorities have legislated when to observe Halloween. And it has often tied them in knots.

Christian groups have resisted public support for Halloween on Sunday because of its associations with the occult.

Public safety is part of the concern; in 2003, parish officials and city leaders in Denham Springs moved up Halloween a day to keep it away from Friday night football.

Shortly after Halloween 2004, the Parish Council decreed that in unincorporated Livingston Parish, Halloween will be at the prescribed hours on Oct. 31 -- unless it falls on a Sunday, as it does this year, and then it's on Monday.

All this has attracted the attention of the American Civil Liberties Union, which has dispatched a letter to parish officials telling them they were violating neighbors' constitutional rights to walk their streets and ask for candy any day they pleased.

The ACLU also warned of the threat to the religious freedom of anyone wanting to celebrate Halloween as a religious feast -- although trick-or-treating is not part of Wiccans' observance of the day.