



National Indigenous Fire Safety Council (NIFSC) Torch the Turtle Costume Guidelines

Torch the Turtle: Our Fire Safety Messenger

Torch the Turtle is the mascot of the National Indigenous Fire Safety Council (NIFSC). This character conveys important fire safety messages to children, youth, and all members of the community, representing resilience, wisdom, and safety for our people.

For our teachings, resources, and community lessons, please visit our webpage:
<https://indigenousfiresafety.ca/en/torch-the-turtle>

Appropriate Messaging

Any fire safety messages presented to the public where Torch the Turtle is present must align with the teachings and messaging approved by the NIFSC.

- Torch the Turtle should be used to support fire safety lessons focused on the well-being of Indigenous homes and communities.
- The messaging should reflect the culturally adapted points outlined in the Image Catalog (e.g., Smoke Alarms, Home Fire Escape, Cooking Safety)

Permissions and Usage

The name and image of Torch the Turtle are associated with and represent the NIFSC.

- The Torch the Turtle costume, name, and image may be used only with written permission from the NIFSC.
- The NIFSC is responsible for approving all usage requests. Requests should be submitted via a formal request through the usage request form:
https://forms.monday.com/forms/4b31b0d621170ac39b281782fa375fdf?r=use_1
- Please detail what material you would like to use, the purpose of using this material, and what the distribution of the final product will be.
- No product bearing the image or likeness of Torch the Turtle may be produced without written permission from the NIFSC. All art, advertising, and public facing materials using Torch must be approved by the NIFSC prior to their use.



- Written approval from NIFSC of the detailed plan is mandatory before Torch Assets may be used in any public or internal setting.

Appropriate Uses

Torch the Turtle costumes may be used for community gatherings, functions, and appearances promoting fire safety within Indigenous communities. These include, but are not limited to:

- Social media videos and posts promoting safety.
- Community feasts, powwows, and gatherings.
- Appearances at schools, youth group meetings, and Elder centres.
- Community safety events and parades.

Inappropriate Uses

Inappropriate uses of Torch the Turtle include:

- Political events or campaigns not authorized by NIFSC.
- Events supporting specific unions or commercial interests.
- Any situation that might compromise the integrity of Torch as a symbol of Indigenous safety and wisdom or negatively reflect the NIFSC and its safety messaging.

Appearance and Conduct

Individuals who wear and use the Torch the Turtle costume must adhere to the following conduct guidelines to maintain the character's positive image:

Protocol and Anonymity

- Use the costume only to further public information, education, and awareness of fire and life safety in our communities.
- Do not speak during appearances. Conversations and explanations should be carried out by a trusted adult or NIFSC representative accompanying Torch.
- Always appear in full, clean, and complete costume.
- Remain anonymous at every appearance and in any publicity connected with an appearance. This includes never being photographed without the costume head on.

- Keep the costume out of sight before and after use.

Engagement

- Appear dignified and friendly. Avoid any form of rowdiness or misbehavior.
- Always be accompanied by an adult in public appearances. A dedicated person should be assigned to safely guide Torch by the elbow.
- The person wearing the costume must exhibit appropriate animation to be effective. Express sincerity and interest by moving the paws, head, and legs.
- Do not rapidly approach small children or force interaction with anyone who doesn't appear to want to engage with Torch.

Safety and Wellness

- Refrain from smoking and using alcohol or drugs immediately prior to and during the Torch the Turtle appearance.
- A private dressing area is necessary for putting on and taking off the costume.
- The person wearing the suit must be completely covered so that no skin is exposed.
- The costume becomes hot to the wearer quickly. Limit appearances to 15-20 minute segments to minimize personal discomfort.
- The person wearing the costume must stay hydrated to prevent overheating.

Care and Security

Care and Maintenance

- Only use costumes that are clean, complete, and in good condition.
- Do not alter the costume, such as adding any symbols or logos, as this undermines the approved NIFSC image.
- After each appearance, check the costume for needed repairs or cleaning. Note this immediately on the storage box for follow-up by the owner/custodian.
- The costume should be cleaned according to the manufacturer's specifications. Regular cleaning is essential to prevent odors and deterioration.
- It's best to store the costume outside of the carrying case when not in use and keep the case lid off to allow it to air out.

Security

Protect the Torch the Turtle costume from theft or vandalism to eliminate unauthorized use, which may cause harm to the integrity of Torch as a symbol of Indigenous fire safety.

- Keep the costume under lock-and-key when it is not in use.
- Use a sign-in/sign-out system to track and control costume use.
- Immediately report theft of the costume to the appropriate NIFSC representatives and local law enforcement.
- When a costume is no longer fit to wear and must be disposed of, the suit shall be rendered unrecognizable by cutting or tearing all components.

Torch the Turtle is a symbol of our collective dedication to safety and wisdom. By following these guidelines, you help us protect the integrity of this important messenger and serve all members of our community.