

TIPS ON KEEPING YOUR SCOUTS SAFE WHILE TRAVELING

By Jay Cash

Part of the appeal of Scouting is the great outdoors, which usually means arranging and coordinating transportation to outings, camp, and parks. The BSA has many useful tools to assist with planning and traveling with personal, unit-owned, or chartered vehicles. The *Guide to Safe Scouting* (No. 34416 or www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx) provides policies and guidelines for safely transporting Scouts.

Additional transportation/safety tips include the following:

Gather driver insurance information during the sign-up or rechartering process. Develop a simple spreadsheet noting the same information required on the Tour and Activity Plan (make, model, year, number of seat belts, valid driver's license, automobile liability coverage amounts, etc.). If a driver changes vehicles, the spreadsheet should be updated.

Encourage all drivers to take the BSA's Risk Zone training. The Risk Zone: Transporting Scouts Safely may be offered at district or council events such as district roundtables or universities of Scouting. Check within your council to see when this training is offered. Additional information may be found at www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/SafetyThoughts/120504.aspx.

Encourage all drivers to take the National Safety Council's Defensive Driving Course, offered through www.Scouting.org. This online course (\$19) increases awareness of roadway safety and helps drivers obtain discounts on their own automobile insurance.



Perform an Annual Motor Vehicle Checklist on all vehicles that will be used for transporting Scouts. This checklist found in the appendix (page 86) of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* can be done with the driver, an assistant Scoutmaster, and an assistant senior patrol leader. For Cub Scout packs, the driver and an assistant Cubmaster can complete the checklist. Venturing crew members should perform the check with another crew member.

Encourage all drivers to minimize distractions such as cellphones, loud music, eating, or drinking (juices, sodas, coffee, or water). In the Risk Zone pledge, drivers are encouraged to turn off their cellphones and put them away in a glove compartment. Drivers should focus only on their driving when they are on the road.

Encourage all drivers to get plenty of rest prior to going on or returning from a Scouting trip. Don't drive drowsy. Studies have shown that driving while fatigued has the same ill effects on reaction time as driving under the influence. Get sufficient rest before any trip, long or short. For outings, units should develop a plan that allows drivers sufficient time for extra rest.

Plan and communicate your trip's route(s) to all drivers and parents. During travel, have enough breaks scheduled to prevent fatigue and accommodate restroom needs. Ideally, a 15 minute break every two hours is suggested.



BOY SCOUTS
OF AMERICA
HEALTH AND SAFETY

Check out the Scouting Safely webpage at myscouting.org for more details and information on transporting Scouts safely.

NEW LIFEGUARD STANDARDS IMPACT LOCAL CAMPS

By David Bell

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) in August 2014, which is expected to become the standard during the next few years for individual state statutes. The code covers swimming pool design, sanitation, and operation, and includes prescriptive rules for lifeguard training, equipment, and performance. The new lifeguard rules will probably impact council recruitment, training, and management of aquatic staff for camps with swimming programs at lakes as well as pools.

Initial MAHC changes to council camp swimming programs will vary by state. Some aspects of the code may eventually be incorporated into the BSA's National Camp Accreditation Program even if a few states are slow to adopt the new regulations.

Pre-service lifeguard training is one aspect of the code likely to affect council operations. The new rules reinforce adequate preparation, requiring that all lifeguards be tested in the skills needed for certification. Testing includes substituting manikins for practice victims during rescue scenarios. In addition, each lifeguard team must be tested using written, site-specific emergency action plans. Current BSA camp standards stipulate a minimum of eight hours of camp staff training for day camps and 28 hours for resident camps. The ratio of time spent on campwide training and program-specific aquatic training will likely need adjustment. The new code also requires that detailed records of training be retained for three years.

Any facility that employs two or more lifeguards must have a supervisor trained in lifeguard management as well as rescue skills. That role is typically assumed by the aquatics director at a Scout camp. The BSA's National Camping School (NCS) Aquatics Instructor training meets the standard for lifeguard management.



However, the MAHC also states that a lifeguard supervisor must have at least three months' prior experience as a lifeguard. When that rule becomes effective, completion of NCS aquatics training will not suffice. Councils that wish to stay ahead of the curve should consider developing a succession plan for camp aquatics directors.

The BSA National Aquatics Task Force monitors changes in aquatics protocols and standards of care and will strive to incorporate MAHC requirements into BSA programs. Stay tuned for future developments. For specific questions, contact either Outdoor Programs or Health and Safety at the National Service Center.



PART ONE: LIGHTNING RISK REDUCTION

The National Weather Service (NWS) and the BSA's *Guide to Safe Scouting* promote the public service message "When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!" Since there is really no safe place outside when a thunderstorm is near, take the following actions to reduce the risk of being struck or otherwise injured by lightning:

- Seek shelter in a substantial building or in a vehicle with a metal top and sides when you first hear thunder, see lightning, or observe dark or threatening clouds developing overhead.
- Stay inside the shelter or vehicle until 30 minutes after you hear the last rumble of thunder. Then you can resume your outdoor activities.

When outdoors, it may not always be possible to seek shelter in a building or vehicle. While not guaranteeing your safety, you can still reduce your risk from lightning by following these basic guidelines:

- If you hear thunder—find safer terrain immediately.
- Once lightning gets close—avoid tall isolated trees, ridgelines, wide-open areas, or lakes.
- If lightning is striking nearby—spread the members of your group 100 feet apart and have everyone get into the lightning safety position: crouching low with feet close together to significantly reduce the effect of ground current.

Council, District, or Unit Precautions

To prepare for such times, organizers should develop a lightning risk reduction plan. Identify venues or activities where lightning would pose a significant hazard.

The following checklist items will help in preparing a plan:

Weather Awareness—Obtain timely thunderstorm information. Designate a weather watcher, and assign someone to be "in charge" with the authority to stop events when required.



Public Notification Plan—Establish a plan for communicating to staff, leaders, Scouts, and other attendees that the threat of lightning and hazardous weather exists. Outline the safety measures that will be implemented, including sheltering or evacuation, if the threat becomes imminent. Define criteria for how long these measures should be in effect.

Staff Education and Plan Review—Educate the leaders and staff so that they know the lightning safety rules and are comfortable with all aspects of the written lightning safety plan.

Protection Plan—Identify safe structures and best practices to use for a given location and activity. Provide specific evacuation instructions and maps with specific actions to minimize exposure.

Please visit www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov, where the National Weather Service provides a two-sided downloadable flier with [general lightning safety tips](#). Additional information on lightning safety is available from the [National Outdoor Leadership School \(NOLS\)](#), and you can watch a seven-minute NOLS MythCrushers video on the topic at www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVSCD1mdzY0. The video will be useful for Scouts heading into the backcountry to camp or hike.

NOTE: *Part 2 of Lightning Risk Reduction will appear the fall edition of the Health and Safety newsletter.*



A SCOUT'S HEALTHY EATING MAY BEGIN WITH YOU

By Dr. Larry Kubiak

To remain physically healthy, children need a variety of nutrients. Proteins, complex carbohydrates, healthy fats, minerals, and vitamins all assist with their daily development, protecting them from childhood illnesses and preventing chronic diseases as they grow into adults. Good eating habits also decrease the risk of cavities, eating disorders, and unhealthy weight-control behaviors.

As parents and Scout leaders, it is important to model healthy eating. We can be influential as “taste setters,” promoting a child’s appreciation for the flavors of healthy food. We should also monitor and control when and what children eat; purchase the right foods for them at home, and keep nutrition in mind when planning and approving menus for campouts.

To help maintain good diets for Scouts—and anyone else—remember the motto, “Go, Slow, Whoa”:

- *Go* foods are those that are low in fat, sugar, and calories. These include nutrient-dense foods such as fruits and vegetables.
- *Slow* foods are higher in fat, sugar, and calories (e.g., white bread, pancakes, and fruit canned in syrup). These foods should be eaten less often.
- *Whoa* foods are low in nutrients and very high in fat with added sugar and calories. Examples include candy, soda, and french fries, which should only be served once in a while and in small portions.

It is important to make sure that calorie intake and portion size are matched to a child’s age and activity level. Making lifestyle changes can be challenging at any age and require time and commitment. When lapses or missteps occur, resolve to recover and get back on track. The American Psychological Association offers five tips to assist in making a change toward healthy eating:

- Make a plan that will stick. Be specific and write everything down. Set realistic goals and post your plan where you can see it.

Planning for Food Allergies at Camp

By Bev Singel, RN

Food allergies are on the rise in the U.S. and now affect nearly 6 million Americans under 18, an increase of approximately 50 percent since the late 1990s. But it isn’t just a concern for children and youth. An estimated 4 percent of adults have at least one type of food allergy. The numbers are disturbing because some of these allergies can be life threatening.

Make sure to include plans for managing food allergies as you prepare for camping season. [Review the guidelines](#) from the BSA’s Health and Safety Team, which were written to educate and prepare councils, camps, units, and individuals for addressing food allergies at any type of Scouting activity.

Planning must begin early and involve many people including the individual(s) with the food allergies, their family members, camp medical staff, all adult leaders, and everyone who helps with food preparation. Always be sure protect the privacy and confidentiality of the individual.

Having a successful camping season starts with planning. Keep in mind those participants with food allergies while planning your season!

- Start small. Break down your goals into small, manageable steps that are specifically defined and can be measured.
- Focus on one goal or behavioral change at a time. Once a new, healthy behavior has become a habit, try out another goal.
- Involve a buddy, someone who can help to keep you motivated and accountable. Having someone to share your struggles and successes makes the task easier and less intimidating.
 - Ask for support. Accepting help from those who care about you and will listen will strengthen your resilience and commitment.



REVISED NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS MANUAL RELEASED

By Connie Elliott

The BSA has released a revised 2015 edition of the *National Shooting Sports Manual* (No. 30931) that can be downloaded from www.Scouting.org. This manual contains many revisions as well as information on additional programs available to councils.

The two newest programs are Sporting Arrows and Flash Ball, which were approved by the Shooting Sports Task Force and Outdoor Programs Committee.

The programs may be offered only at the local council level and only for Boy Scouts, Venturers, and Sea Scouts. Please note that they do require a range layout that is larger than a standard archery range, and both require the purchase of special equipment. To conduct these programs, a council will need to complete an application and submit it for approval to the Outdoor Programs/Properties Department. Completed applications can be emailed to shootingsports@scouting.org. The range layouts, standard operating procedures, and qualified supervision requirements are available at www.scouting.org/OutdoorProgram/Properties/Resources/DesignGuidelines.

