

For Immediate Release

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**Boy Scouts of America and U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Work Together on New Emergency Preparedness Initiative**

BSA Award for Youth and Adults Builds Upon Ready Campaign

Derby, CT (May 8, 2003)—The Boy Scouts of America has announced it is joining with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to ensure the nation's youth are prepared for any situation.

The United States Department of Homeland Security is supporting the Boy Scouts of America in developing a campaign to help citizens across the country prepare for emergencies of all kinds. The new initiative—Emergency Preparedness BSA—builds upon the organization's well-known legacy of emergency and safety training.

"The U.S. Department of Homeland Security is pleased to partner with the Boy Scouts of America to promote preparedness for both youth and adults," said Michael Brown, undersecretary for emergency preparedness and response. "By continuing to build upon the foundation of the department's Ready campaign, we will work together to explore additional ways to make emergency preparedness information available to Scouts and Scouters alike."

From first aid training to safe swim defense, the Housatonic Council has a tradition of preparing Scouts to deal with emergencies, says Scout Executive Steven McEwan.

"The safety of our youth and their families is our highest priority," said Mr. McEwan. "We're proud to make this type of training an important service to our members and our communities."

Roy L. Williams, Chief Scout Executive of the Boy Scouts of America, said the initiative is the most recent in a long line of community service projects Scouts have undertaken in support of the nation.

"From its very inception, Scouting has taught our nation's youth to do their best, to do their duty to God and country, and to be prepared," said Williams. "The emergencies of today's world demand more than ever that our young people and adults be trained to deal with many different situations, both as individuals and families."

When youth participants and adult volunteers fulfill the requirements for the new Emergency Preparedness BSA award, they will earn a pin and recognition certificate. For every level and age group, there are age-appropriate tasks and curriculum for members from Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts to BSA adult volunteers.

Age-specific requirements include

- taking the Red Cross *First Aid for Children Today* course,
- joining a safe kids program such as McGruff Child Identification,
- building a family emergency kit,
- completing Scouting merit badges such as First Aid and Emergency Preparedness,
- developing a pack or troop preparedness plan, and
- taking first aid and CPR courses from appropriate agencies.

“The Department of Homeland Security has three essential missions: preventing a terrorist attack, reducing our vulnerability to an attack, and third, being prepared to respond quickly and effectively,” Brown said. “We see the BSA and its membership being key to all three missions.”

“We look forward to a strong relationship with the Department of Homeland Security and helping our members be prepared,” Williams said.

For more information about requirements for the new Emergency Preparedness BSA initiative, log on to the Boy Scouts of America’s official Web site, www.scouting.org , or contact the Housatonic Council, B.S.A.at 203-734-3329.