

Ensure a happy holiday parade with these safety tips

Marching in a holiday parade with your Scouts this year? Keeping everyone safe should be tops on your wish list. After all, nothing can ruin the holidays quicker than a sprained ankle or broken arm — or worse — a few days before winter break.

Here are some parade tips:



1. Have qualified supervision

Many packs and troops use a four-corners approach with adults: two adults at the front — left and right — and two bringing up the rear.

2. Consider physical fitness

How long is the parade route? Are there hills?

Adults and youth need to be in good enough shape for the length and conditions.

3. Use the buddy system

Before you begin the march, make sure each Scout — and adult! — has a buddy.

4. Bring personal safety equipment

Dress for the weather, and bring the following:

- First aid kit (one or two per unit should suffice)
- Rain gear
- Good walking shoes
- Water bottle
- Sunblock
- Insect repellant

5. Follow proper safety procedures

- Allow adequate space between marchers and any vehicles
- Designate a lookout to watch out for vehicles and other hazards
- Take head counts before, during and after the parade.

The BSA rule prohibiting the **transportation of passengers in the backs of trucks or on trailers** may be tempered for parade floats or hayrides, provided that the following points are strictly followed to prevent injuries:

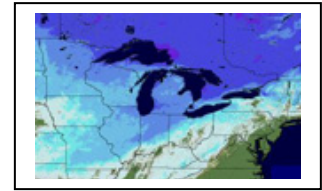
- Transportation to and from the parade or hayride site is not allowed on the truck or trailer.
- Those persons riding, whether seated or standing, must be able to hold on to something stationary.
- Legs should not hang over the side.
- Flashing lights must illuminate a vehicle used for a hayride after dark, or the vehicle must be followed by a vehicle with flashing lights.

6. Watch the weather

Don't let a blizzard, high winds or rain make your parade dangerous.

Check the forecast several days out and daily as the parade approaches.

The best outcome in weather emergencies is to avoid them altogether.



7. Plan ahead

Did you complete the Even Checklist to help with planning?

https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/HealthSafety/pdf/event_checklist.pdf

Do you have all of your permission slips?

Did you determine a meeting spot for before and after the parade?

Did you distribute maps and emergency cellphone numbers to the adults?

Hold a pre-parade meeting with adult leaders where you discuss these items, consider severe-weather locations and discuss the location of a support vehicle nearby.

8. Secure a communication plan

Cellphones or two-way radios can keep everyone on the same page.

You can use them in emergencies, of course, but also to tell parents and families when you're nearing their spot along the parade route.

If you're using cellphones, make sure you have numbers pre-programmed into your phone. With radios, find an open channel and stick to it.



9. File any applications and permits for the parade

File your application for the parade or any other required permits your city or county might need.

10. Follow applicable laws

Know and follow all parade rules and regulations.

Most community parades have rules that they distribute to all participants.

Be sure to read them carefully.

Liability Insurance

Participating in a parade representing BSA is normally considered an official Scouting activity, which is defined in the insurance policy as consistent with the values, Charter and Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, the operations manuals, and applicable literature of the Boy Scouts of America. The BSA general liability coverage provides primary general liability coverage for registered volunteer Scouters with respect to claims arising out of an official Scouting activity. This coverage responds to allegations of negligent actions by third parties that result in personal injury or property damage claims that are made and provides protection for Scouting units and chartered organizations.

The BSA general liability insurance program provides volunteers additional excess coverage for automobiles above a local council's automobile liability policy or a volunteer's watercraft liability policy. The owner's vehicle or watercraft liability insurance

is primary. The excess insurance, whether it is the local council auto or BSA general liability, is available only while the vehicle or watercraft is in the actual use of a Scouting unit and being used for a Scouting purpose.

The insurance provided to **unregistered** Scouting volunteers through the general liability insurance program is excess over any other insurance the volunteer might have to his or her benefit, usually a homeowners, personal liability, vehicle, or watercraft policy.

The general liability policy **does not** provide indemnification or defense coverage to those individuals who commit intentional and/or criminal acts. The Boy Scouts of America does not have an insurance policy that provides defense for situations involving allegations of intentional and/or criminal acts.

Sources:

Guide to Safe Scouting <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/>

Bryan on Scouting December 2014, Bryan Wendell, Health and Safety Scouting Tips

BSA Insurance <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/alerts/insurance/>