



girl scouts 
of eastern missouri



Position Papers

Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri

2300 Ball Drive » St. Louis, MO 63146 » 314.592.2300 » 800.727.GIRL [4475]

POSITION PAPERS

The following *Position Papers* were developed to address issues of concern to the membership of the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri.

Position Papers address the rationale for the Council's position, any background information relative to the position and the Council's position.

Resources used to develop *Position Papers* are *Safety Activity Checkpoints* (<http://www.girlscoutsem.org/content/822/safety-activity-checkpoints.aspx>), *GSEM Essentials (2000)* and *Volunteer Essentials* (<http://www.girlscoutsem.org/content/256/volunteer-resource-guide.aspx>).

Notes regarding 2012 edition:

Topics Removed in 2012

Girl Scout Silver and Gold Award

Troop Money-Earning became Fund Raising – Subordinate Units Troops, Neighborhoods/Service Units and Districts/Areas

Guidance on Debit and Credit Cards incorporated into Subordinate Unit Bank Accounts

NEW TOPICS:

Adult Emergency Medical Information/Permission to Treat Form

Certificate of Insurance

Collections and Returned Checks

Fund Raising / Subordinate Units (e.g. Troops, Neighborhood / Service Units and District / Areas)

GIRL SCOUTS OF EASTERN MISSOURI

POSITION PAPERS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Adults As Advisors When Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors or Ambassadors Serve As Program Leaders/Aides	p. 4
Adult Emergency Medical Information/Permission To Treat	p.5
Adult Health History	p.6
Appropriate Girl Scout Songs and Skits	p.8
April Showers	p.9
Certificate of Insurance.....	p.11
Child Safety Restraints and Booster Seat Law	p.13
Co-ed Program Activities/Service Projects for Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors ..	p.15
Collections and Returned Checks.....	p.16
Fund Raising/Subordinate Units (e.g. Troops, Neighborhoods, Service Units/ Districts, Areas).....	p.19
Girl Scout Ambassadors as Adult Leaders.....	p.23
Guidelines for Use of Girl Scout Logo.....	p.24
Hold Harmless/Indemnification Procedures.....	p.25
Internet Guidelines.....	p.26
Involuntary Removal of Adults from Girl Scout Activities	p.28
Lice	p.30
Outdoor Girl Scout Activities During Modern Firearms Deer Hunting Season	p.32
Pressurized Fuel Appliances	p.34
Search of Personal Property (formerly Contraband Material and Concealed Weapons).....	p.38
Sensitive Issues	p.42
Smoking Guidelines for Adults Participating in Girl Scout Activities	p.44
Smoking Guidelines for Girls Participating in Girl Scout Activities	p.46
Subordinate Unit (Troops/Neighborhoods/Districts) Bank Accounts.....	p.47
Use of Earthballs.....	p.50
Use of Fifteen-Passenger Vans.....	p.51
Use of Helium-Filled Latex or Mylar Balloons.....	p.52

TOPIC:	ADULTS AS ADVISORS WHEN GIRL SCOUT CADETTES, SENIORS OR AMBASSADORS SERVE AS PROGRAM LEADERS/AIDES
DATE:	January 2000 May 2007 (Revised) March 2008 (Revised) March 2012 (Revised)
AREA:	Girl Development
RATIONALE:	To provide guidelines for adults serving as advisors to Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors or Ambassadors program leaders/aides.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	Many programs held each year by the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri (GSEM) are planned and implemented by Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors or Ambassadors with adults serving as advisors. The Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors or Ambassadors in many instances generate the program idea, spend many hours planning activities, implement and evaluate the program. Adult volunteers, when serving as advisors, play an important role in making sure the program activities are successfully implemented.
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION	<p>The GSEM is committed to offering healthy and safe activities for all of its members.</p> <p>The GSEM also encourages and supports Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors in leadership roles.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Safety Activity Checkpoints</i> and the <i>Volunteer Essentials</i> serve as resources for program leaders/aides and adults. 2. During the planning of an event, although girls may plan and implement programs, adults need to be involved to ensure girl/adult ratios and other activity checkpoints are met. Adult advisors should work closely with the girl for whom she/he is an advisor, making sure all <i>Safety Activity Checkpoints</i> safety guidelines have been reviewed and are in place for all activities. 3. While the event is in progress, adult advisors should provide close observation and supervision of activities and be available to assist with program implementation as needed. Adult advisors should make certain that all activities in progress meet <i>Safety Activity Checkpoints</i> standards. 4. After the conclusion of the event, the adult advisors should assist in evaluating the program activities and the girl involvement.

TOPIC:	ADULT EMERGENCY MEDICAL INFORMATION/PERMISSION TO TREAT FORM
DATE:	June 2012
AREA:	Adult Development
RATIONALE:	To ensure the health and safety of adults participating in Girl Scout events, trainings and programs. Program coordinators and staff need to be aware of health conditions that could result in a life-threatening situation.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	Many events in which adults participate do not reach the level of risk requiring the submission of a comprehensive health history. Those events that do require the submission of a comprehensive health history are listed in this publication under Adult Health History.
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION	<p>An abbreviated health form was developed to collect only the most necessary information to allow the use of emergency medical procedures on adults unable to consent to or assist in their own treatment.</p> <p>In order to maintain an individual's privacy, information should only be shared with personnel involved with the planning and implementation of Girl Scout activities, activity first aider and emergency medical service personnel to ensure the health and safety of all participants. Volunteers should make every effort to protect health information and should only disclose such information to healthcare professionals providing treatment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Adult Emergency Medical Information/Permission To Treat Form (VP-87A) should be included in the registration process. 2. The VP-87A should be kept by the troop leader or the individual designed to serve in the first aider capacity for the program, training, or event. 3. The event planning committee in consultation with GSEM staff advisor determines whether the Adult Health History VP-87 or Adult Emergency Medical Information/Permission To Treat Form VP-87A is appropriate to use based upon the activity risk level at the event, training or program.

TOPIC:	ADULT HEALTH HISTORY
DATE:	January 1993 March 2012 (Revised)
AREA:	Volunteer Services
RATIONALE:	To ensure the health and safety of adults participating in Girl Scout events. Program and camp event health staff need to be aware of health conditions that could result in a life-threatening situation.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	The staff at GSEM may take care of obtaining and storing participants' health histories, which may include a physician's examination and a list of immunizations, as needed. Or, a volunteer may be asked to maintain records for participants in a program or event. Either way, keep in mind that information from a health examination is confidential and may be shared only with people who must know this information such as the participant, adult first aider and a health practitioner.
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	<p>An Adult Health History (VP-87) is required for all adults participating in day camp, troop camp, resident camp, overnight girl and/or adult events, and some one-day events. For short term events see Adult Emergency Medical Information/Permission to Treat (VP-87A) for guidance on requesting a health history from an adult for a short-term event, trainings, events, etc. Adult participants, in most training and program events, which are not overnight activities or do not involve physically demanding activities, are not required to provide a health history. They should provide an Adult Emergency Medical Information/Permission to Treat (VP-87A) to advise the event/training coordinator or first aider of any health condition that could result in a life-threatening situation.</p> <p>The amount of information required to be disclosed on a health history will vary depending on the risk of the activity. A detailed list of health concerns is not required. For most troop activities, general statements about health restrictions such as allergies, food restrictions or other helpful emergency care information plus the "In Case of Medical Emergency" section should be signed. For other higher risk activities such as horseback riding, rock climbing or resident camp, a more detailed health history may be required.</p> <p>In order to maintain the privacy, information should only be shared with personnel involved with the planning and implementation of Girl Scout activities and emergency medical service/personnel to ensure the health and safety of all participants. Volunteers should make every effort to protect health information and should only disclose such information to health care professionals providing treatment.</p> <p>Other events may require an Adult Health History (VP-87) depending on the nature of activities and location of event (i.e., backpacking, hiking at a local park).</p>

**ADULT HEALTH HISTORY
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 2**

1. The Adult Health History (VP-87) should be included in the registration process.
2. The Adult Health History (VP-87) for adults camping should be kept by the First Aider or troop leader.
3. The Adult Health History (VP-87) for adults attending district, neighborhood and Council-sponsored overnight programs should be held by the event designated individual. Instructions on how health forms are handled are usually included in event confirmation material.
4. The event planning committee, in consultation with staff, determines the appropriateness of an Adult Health History (VP-87) for all other events/training.

TOPIC:	APPROPRIATE GIRL SCOUT SONGS AND SKITS
DATE:	April 1994 March 2012 (Updated)
AREA:	Girl Development
RATIONALE:	To assure that songs and skits being sung and/or participated in by Girl Scouts are in keeping with the Girl Scout program standards.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	Music, singing and acting (skits) are an important part of the Girl Scout traditions. These activities help create new and special memories and link Girl Scouts around the world. Skits give girls an opportunity to express feelings, try new roles, and develop a sense of confidence at the completion of the skit or song.
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	<p>Music, singing and acting skills help create troop spirit and unity. At large scale Girl Scout events, it brings together girls from different backgrounds and experiences, and gives them a common experience.</p> <p>The Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri does not censor songs sung or skits performed by Girl Scouts, but it does have a vested interest in the quality and value of songs and skits being taught to children. Girls, with mature adult guidance, should make decisions on the appropriateness of songs and skits where and when they are performed. The decision to say a grace, blessing or invocation is made at the group level and should be sensitive to spiritual beliefs of all participants.</p> <p>A wide range of resources on songs and skits are available through the Girl Scout Resource Center and public libraries. Girl's needs, interests, abilities and the age appropriateness of the material should be kept in mind when selecting songs and skits for use at Girl Scout activities.</p> <p>Some tips on incorporating songs and skits in your program plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know and practice a repertoire of familiar songs that can be easily learned by the whole group. 2. Practice new songs in advance of special ceremonies and campfires. 3. Plan a time to learn new songs and skits. (Watch GSEM course catalog for song-related workshops.) 4. Introduce Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri Sings: a patch program for all age levels of girls to acquire knowledge about singing.

TOPIC:	APRIL SHOWERS
DATE:	June 2005 March 2010 (Updated)
AREA:	Program
RATIONALE:	To communicate to the membership a consistent message regarding participation in April Showers.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	<p>April Showers is the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri annual community service project. It began as a troop service project in 1994. Troops collected items such as soap, diapers and toilet paper from their families, school or local communities and donated them to neighborhood food pantries. In 1998, April Showers became a Council-wide project with contributions growing from 617,000 items in 1998 to over 1,000,000 items collected in 2009. April Showers is one component of the Council's year round community service program – Seasons of Giving. Through April Showers, Girl Scouts put the Girl Scout Promise and Law into action.</p> <p>The Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri collaborates with Operation Food Search (OFS) on this program. OFS aides in the collection and distribution of the items.</p> <p>Personal care items such as soap, toothpaste and deodorant are in high demand at food pantries because they cannot be purchased with food stamps. Prior to April Showers, only one percent of all contributions to food pantries were personal care items.</p> <p>Personal cleanliness can have a tremendous impact on health, the control of disease and self-esteem. April Showers helps make a difference in the lives of individuals and families in need.</p>
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	<p>The Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri is committed to providing this service to the community. The Council encourages all Girl Scouts, volunteers and family members to participate in April Showers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All registered Girl Scouts are expected to participate in April Showers through bag distribution and bag collection. 2. District and Neighborhood events scheduled for either April Showers weekend must be planned to incorporate April Showers as part of the event. Troops camping are expected to participate in April Showers on the alternate weekend. 3. Families are an integral part of April Showers. They can support girl and troop participation by assisting with bag distribution and bag collection, at a trailer drop or by planning a special activity to celebrate the completion of the service project.

**APRIL SHOWERS
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 2**

4. The Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri encourages all girls and adults who volunteer and participate on an ongoing basis to be registered members of GSUSA. This includes those assisting with April Showers.
5. Non-member insurance will be provided by the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri for family and friends who volunteer for April Showers.

TOPIC: CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE

DATE: June 2012

AREA: All

RATIONALE: To provide guidance to Girl Scout staff and volunteers on the use of Certificate of Insurance.

THE COUNCIL'S POSITION: Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri approved the following motion at the November 19, 2008 Board of Directors meeting.

“Rather than the Council continuing to be involved in the issue of releases from individual participants or their parents, subordinate units (troop/district/neighborhood) will administer the completion of any “release” required by outside vendors/venues from individual participants or their parents. No change is recommended related to any release required from GSEM (where GSEM is a legal party to the release), and these will continue to be sent to the Service Center for review and signature by the appropriate Service Center management. It should also be noted that the responsibility of the Council and/or subordinate unit to reasonably ensure that the venue we are utilizing is safe for the girls remains unchanged, regardless of who administers and/or signs the actual release.”

1. As is standard for all “vendors” (collectively: vendors, program providers, operators and program venues), GSEM shall request a Certificate of Insurance (COI) for a minimum of \$1,000,000 in Commercial General Liability coverage ⁽¹⁾. The COI must be issued to Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri, Inc. and shall be submitted to staff advisor, e.g. Community Development Manager, Program Manager, Adult Education Manager, etc. The COI shall also include Automobile coverage (if the “vendor” is coming onto a GSEM site or is providing transportation as part of the program), and Workers Compensation coverage (if the “vendor” is coming onto a GSEM site). In some cases, depending on the nature of the activity and its potential risk, GSEM may request to be named as an additional ensured on the Certificate of Insurance.
2. GSEM will issue a Certificate of Insurance as requested by “vendors”, depending on the facts/circumstances of the event, and may consider a vendor’s request to name the “vendor” as an additional ensured. The staff advisor for the program is responsible for requesting the COI, ensuring the minimum levels of coverage are reflected, ensuring the policy dates indicated include the dates of the program/event. The COI is to be forwarded to the CFAO with adequate time prior to the scheduled start of the program/event for any additional steps (minimum 21 days prior to deadline for GSEM decision).

**Certificate of Insurance
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 2**

3. Subordinate units should request COIs evidencing Commercial General Liability coverage of at least \$1,000,000 (1). If the program/event is to occur on a GSEM or subordinate unit's site, the COI must also include Auto coverage of at least \$1,000,000 (\$5,000,000 if a large bus carrying 45 or more is used).

¹A lesser limit (under \$1 million) may be considered by GSEM under certain circumstances. Contact Kathy Dabrowski, Director, Girl Development, 314-592-2324 or kdabrowski@girlscoutsem.org with questions. Approved COIs can be found by accessing the following link, <http://www.girlscoutsem.org/Portals/0/cois-received-by-gsem.pdf>.

TOPIC: CHILD SAFETY RESTRAINTS AND BOOSTER SEAT LAW

DATE: August 2006
June 2010 (revised)

AREA: Program

RATIONALE: To inform leaders and volunteers about the law requiring the use of child safety/booster seats based on height, weight and age of the child.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION In 2006, a new law went into effect that requires children of certain ages, weights and heights to be restrained by a child passenger restraint system or booster seat. This new law may affect Girl Scout Daisy and Brownie troops wishing to travel on field trips/events as a group. The law went into effect August 28, 2006.

THE COUNCIL'S POSITION: The Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri is committed to the highest standard of safety in all program activities. All national, state and local laws should be followed to ensure all participants safety.

GUIDELINES: Facts:

- Age Classification: Children less than four (4) years old, regardless of weight, must be secured in an appropriate child passenger restraint system or booster seat.
- Weight Classification: Children less than forty (40) pounds, regardless of age, must be secured in an appropriate child passenger restraint system or booster seat.
- Height Classification: Children less than four feet nine inches (4'9") tall, between the ages of 4 and 7 and who weigh at least forty (40) pounds but less than eighty (80) pounds must be secured in an appropriate child passenger restraint system or booster seat.

Age	Weight	Height	Requirements
Less than 4 years old	Less than 40 pounds	Less than 4'9" tall	Child Passenger Restraint System
4 - 7 years old	At least 40 pounds but less than 80 pounds	4'9" tall or shorter	Child Passenger Restraint System or Booster Seat
8 years or older	At least 80 pounds or more	Taller than 4'9" tall	Must be secured by a Safety Belt or Booster System

**CHILD SAFETY RESTRAINTS
AND BOOSTER SEAT LAW
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 2**

- The act allows a child to be transported in the back seat without a booster seat if the child is secured with a lap belt if the vehicle is not equipped with combination lap and shoulder belt for booster seat installation.
 - According to www.carseat.org, “Until the 1990 model year, most cars had only lap belts in the back seat. Shoulder belts have been required in the outboard (**side**) positions in the back seat of new sedans, station wagons, and hatchbacks made starting in December 1989. The same requirement applies to vans, SUV’s, and pickup trucks starting with 1992 models.” – www.carseat.org/Technical/640_RetroSB.pdf
 - Title 490 of the Code of Federal Regulations mandates that all vehicles with forward facing seats, outboard or interior, will be equipped with combination lap and shoulder seat belts starting with the 2006 model year. –www.access.gpo.gov .

Troop Leader/ Adult Volunteer Responsibility:

- Volunteers are responsible for ensuring the highest safety standards for the girls under their care and complying with the law.
- Adults transporting children are expected to follow both federal and state laws regarding motor vehicle safety and child transportation.
- A child who does not meet the minimum height/weight/age requirements should not be transported without a child safety/booster seat.
- If the parent/guardian does not provide the appropriate child safety/booster seat for transportation, the parent/guardian should be notified that he/she is responsible for providing transportation for the child to the field trip or event.

Violations and State Fines:

- A violation of the child passenger restraint/booster provisions is an infraction and the fine is \$50 plus court costs.
- The fine for violating the safety belt provision of the act is \$10.

More information and educational resources can be obtained by contacting:

- Highway Safety Division of the Missouri Department of Transportation at 1.800.800.2358, www.modot.org or www.boosterseat.gov
- Child Passenger Safety at 202.393.2072, www.usasafekids.com
- Seatcheck.org

TOPIC:	COED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES/SERVICE PROJECTS FOR GIRL SCOUT SENIORS AND AMBASSADORS
DATE:	January 2000 June 2004 (Revised) March 2008 (Revised)
AREA:	Program
RATIONALE:	To provide guidelines for Girl Scout-sponsored program activities/service projects with male participants.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	In 1999, The Girl Scout Senior Planning Board expressed a desire to sponsor a trivia night event where young males of the same age were invited to participate. This event was approved by the Program Committee in Fall 1999 and became the model for other Council, district, and neighborhood events for Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors. Many opportunities exist for the Girl Scouts to collaborate with all-boy organizations or to sponsor events/service projects with co-ed participation. These events for Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors have been implemented to address the changing needs of today's girls.
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	<p>Following are guidelines for co-ed program activities/service projects for Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All events must be approved on the Council, district or neighborhood level. 2. Events must have the appropriate participant/adult ratio. 3. Event directors must take out non-member insurance for the event. 4. All participants must have a signed parent permission form.

TOPIC: **COLLECTIONS – RETURNED CHECKS (Council programs and GSUSA Membership Fees)**

DATE: February, 2012

AREA: Administration/Finance

RATIONALE: Individual Subordinate Units (troops/neighborhoods/districts) should not be responsible for losses sustained due to checks being returned by the bank that the Subordinate Unit accepted for Council programs (including the cookie program and fall product program) or GSUSA membership registration. NOTE: This does not pertain to checks written and signed by authorized subordinate unit personnel. Those checks are considered individually and if warranted reimbursement to the troop will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The product sale programs represent over 70% of Council revenue, plus the bulk of revenue for troops. In addition, neighborhood's administration of GSUSA annual membership registrations represents an additional volume of funds.

One of the Council's top priorities in 2007 was to resolve issues that were defined as internal control weaknesses by our external auditors, one of which was the ineffective process of tracking and collecting returned checks. In the opinion of our external auditors, these processes lacked adequate, consistent internal controls, and failed to consistently collect the debts.

At that point, Council staff resources were being used for the initial collection efforts and if this "internal" effort was not successful, the returned checks were turned over to a variety of outside collection agencies.

During 2006 and 2007, over 1,300 checks were returned each year, costing the Council approximately \$110,000 per year in 2006 and 2007 to follow up.

While the cost of collecting and writing off returned checks is not directly assessed to Subordinate Units, given the fact that 86% of Council expenditures in 2006 and 2007 went directly to fund programs for girls, the \$110,000 per year in returned checks that was "lost" resulted in a reduction of nearly \$95,000 each year in funds available to support programs for girls.

**COLLECTIONS – RETURNED CHECKS
POSITION PAPER
PAGE 2**

In 2007-2008 management engaged a variety of resources to develop a viable, cost-effective process for administering returned checks. These resources included: our primary financial institution; external auditors; other Girl Scout councils; outside legal counsel; and volunteers. Our goal was to develop a process that would:

1. Consistently comply with all applicable laws and regulations;
2. Continue to insulate Subordinate Units from the impact of returned checks. In order for this to continue to be achieved, all checks for which the Council indemnifies subordinate units would continue to be deposited into Council accounts (may not be deposited into Subordinate Unit accounts);
3. Ensure cost effectiveness for the Council as a whole, including Subordinate Units;
4. Preclude the use of Council staff resources in collecting returned checks;
5. Replace multiple collection agencies with a single outside vendor to administer/collect returned checks;
6. Acknowledge the ultimate responsibility/accountability for a returned check rests with the individual who wrote the check.

**THE COUNCIL'S
POSITION**

It is critical for the ongoing success of the Council and its troops that policies and practices are maintained that ensure not only that Subordinate Units are indemnified from the impact of returned checks, but also that proper internal controls are in place over the receipt, depositing, tracking and collection of all funds for those programs.

As the result these efforts in 2007-08, the following process was accepted by the GSEM Finance Committee for implementation in 2009:

1. Based on reviews with GSEM's main bank and members of the Finance Committee, Kramer & Frank (K&F) was selected to administer the collection process. K&F is a law firm specializing in collections, not a commercial collection agency.
2. K&F's efforts and processes, including notifications and fees, will consistently adhere to all applicable Missouri statutes.
3. GSEM will receive full face value for all collected items. K&F will retain all fees allowable under Missouri statute that are recovered from the debtor.
4. No fees will be assessed if the debtor pays the face value of the check within 33 days of the date of the initial notice. Missouri statute provides for a 30 day grace period, K&F provides an additional 3 days.

**COLLECTIONS – RETURNED CHECKS
POSITION PAPER
PAGE 3**

5. All of GSEM's banks will immediately forward returned items to K&F to begin the collection process. These returned items will NOT be sent first to GSEM by the banks.

Since implementing in 2008, the net loss from returned checks reduced from an average of over \$100,000/year in 2006-2007, to approximately \$50,000 in 2010.

Complaints about the fees, and "justifications" for why checks are returned are often heard. However, in the final analysis the girls bear the added costs of handling and collecting returned checks and the Council's position is those costs are the responsibility of the writer of the returned check. Dealing with returned checks creates a diversion of resources otherwise intended to serve girls. Fees established by Missouri statute are intended to offset the diversion of resources caused by the returned check, and deter the issuing of bad checks. In the end, regardless of the "reason" for the bad check, Girl Scouts sustain the direct and indirect negative impact caused by the need to deal with returned checks.

Council is often asked to waive the fees because the debtor contends they are excessive, particularly on small checks. In response:

1. Adequate notifications (33 days) is given to the individual writing the check before a fee is assessed.
2. All fees applied are within the parameters set by Missouri statute. The amount of effort required to deal with a returned check is not dependent on the amount of the check, and the statutory fees recognize that fact.
3. The collection attorneys performed the recording/tracking/collection work and are therefore entitled to be compensated.
4. It would not be appropriate for the Council to use resources raised/donated to support girls, to pay our collection attorneys the fees they have earned for the work they have performed.

A justification often presented for not making the check good within the grace period is a contention that the 30-day letter was not received. Unfortunately, with no method to accept or dispute that contention, we can only respond that Missouri law stipulates that the letter be sent (not that we can confirm it was actually received), and to meet the requirements of the law, the collection attorneys must be able to produce a copy of the letter and a statement certifying the letter was actually sent. The Missouri statute does NOT require the notice be sent by certified mail.

Accepting responsibility for one's actions is something Girl Scouting teaches, and in this case, the person who issued the bad check is the appropriate party responsible for the resulting actions necessary to collect the debt.

TOPIC:	FUND RAISING – SUBORDINATE UNITS (e.g. Troops, Neighborhoods/Service Units & Districts/Areas)
DATE:	February, 2012
AREA:	Girl Development/Finance
RATIONALE:	<p>To clarify distinction between “money earning” and “fund raising” as it relates to the organization’s 501c3 tax exempt status.</p> <p>Fund Raising is an adult activity carried out by the Council and involves a direct solicitation for cash.</p> <p>Money earning is an activity that is planned and implemented by the girls, has a program element where girls learn while participating in an activity that raises money to fund troop activities.</p>
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	<p>The policies for subordinate unit “fund raising” activities are found in the <i>Blue Book of Basic Documents</i> (2012 edition)¹ published by Girl Scouts of the USA. Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri (GSEM) has consistently established that the Council will abide by GSUSA direction as set forth in the <i>Blue Book</i>. The following policy, Ownership of Assets, represents the provision in the <i>Blue Book</i> that directly addresses fund raising by subordinate units:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>“All money and other assets, including property, that are raised, earned, or otherwise received in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting must be held and authorized by a Girl Scout Council or Girl Scouts of the USA. Such money and other assets must be used for the purposes of Girl Scouting. They are the property of and are administered by the Girl Scout Council or Girl Scouts of the USA and shall not be sold, given, transferred or conveyed to a third party for less than fair market value. Such assets are not the property of individuals, troops, geographic units, subordinate units, or communities within a Girl Scout Council.”¹</i></p> <p>At the core of the GSUSA policy is direction related to subordinate units is the fact that IRS regulations related to 501c3 charitable organizations distinguishes between activities that “earn” money, versus those that “raise” money.</p> <p>Activities that constitute “<i>money earning</i>” have <u>program</u> components designed to help girls learn and practice life skills, e.g., goal setting, budgeting; planning; money management; etc. It is important to recognize that money “<i>earned</i>” from <u>programs</u> does NOT create an expectation of a tax deductible contribution on the part of the provider(s) of funds.</p>

**FUNDRAISING-SUPBORDINATE UNITS
POSITION PAPER
PAGE 2**

On the other hand, activities that constitutes “*fund raising*” generally lack program components and in the eyes of the IRS, creates a perception on the part of the donor that they are making a tax-deductible donation. As such, these donations are subject to IRS requirements for acknowledgement letters and receipts. The proper recording of tax deductible donations and the issuance of required acknowledgment letters and receipts are functions that can only be effectively performed at the Council level.

WHY THE DISTINCTION – In order for any donation to a 501c3 tax exempt organization to be deductible to the donor, the donor may NOT receive any “benefit” from the donation. Because it is impossible to ensure that donors who restrict gifts to subordinate units do not receive a “benefit” and in fact in many cases they do, we are unable to allow a practice that could place the tax exemptions enjoyed by all subordinate units and the Council at risk. As an example, if a volunteer donates funds restricted to a subordinate unit in which their relative is a member (very typical in a troop situation where the daughter of a donor is often a troop member), the IRS could determine the parent received a “benefit” from their donation because the donation serves to fund their cost of operating the troop.

Such a “benefit” is defined by the IRS as “inurement”. Because the tax law prohibition against “inurement” is absolute (e.g., it is not judged by the materiality of the donation), the Council and all subordinate units are responsible to understand, appreciate and adhere to all legal restrictions related to our tax exempt status. Further, the Council is required to implement and maintain policies and procedure that ensure compliance.

**THE COUNCIL'S
POSITION:**

Listed below are a few of the Council’s positions on “fund raising” by subordinate units. The appropriate control of “fund raising” within Girl Scouting is critical to maintain the positive reputation of Girl Scouts and protect the organization’s 501c3 tax exempt status.

Maintaining our positive reputation requires ethical and transparent policies and procedures that ensure that donations are treated as expected by the donor.

Our 501c3 tax exempt status provides material benefit to the Council and all subordinate units. As an example, the exemption allows troops NOT to pay sales tax on purchases, or to collect and remit sales tax on cookie sales. The protection of this status is absolutely critical to our ongoing operation.

FUNDRAISING-SUPBORDINATE UNITS
POSITION PAPER
PAGE 3

In addition to coverage in the *Blue Book*, controls on “fund raising” by subordinate units are also outlined in a variety of national and Council materials intended to define the “fund raising” roles of GSUSA, Councils, and subordinate units.

1. Subordinate units may participate in activities that “earn money”. The GSEM monograph on *Troop Money Earning* sets forth the requirements and guidance formally adopted by GSEM for Troop Money Earning Activities.
2. Activities involving “money earning” are considered programs. Under IRS regulations, “money-earning” activities have no tax implications to Girl Scouts or the provider of funds. A few examples of programs that could involve “money-earning” include: cookie program; fall product program, fees to attend events; car washes; community service programs, etc.
3. “Fund raising” activity has very different implications to our 501c3 tax exemption. Therefore, subordinate units may not participate in “fund raising” activity where the proceeds are restricted for use by a subordinate unit. The IRS judges that the responses to “fund raising” requests by charitable organizations are presumed, by the donor, to create a tax-deductible contribution. However, under IRS regulations, a tax-deductible contribution may not create a “benefit” for the donor. For these reasons, *GSUSA Blue Book* restrictions prohibit subordinate units from soliciting or accepting contributions restricted for the use of a subordinate unit. The following are some examples the IRS would likely consider prohibited activity:
 - a. Leader/parent donates funds to the Council for the benefit of a subordinate unit where a relative is a member, and directs the funds may only be used for that subordinate unit;
 - b. In a., the donor further applies for a matching contribution from his/her employer, also directed to the same subordinate unit;
 - c. Leader/parent applies for a grant from their employer (e.g.: a grant program where the employer’s donation is based on hours volunteered by their employee), with the funds restricted for use by a subordinate unit with a member related to the leader/parent.
4. If a donor wishes to restrict a donation to a subordinate unit, please refer them to our Fund Development team. In 2012, GSEM reported on the IRS-990 Information Return, that over 91% of all GSEM expenditures are attributable to programs for our girls. Less than 9% of total revenue each year goes to Fund Raising and Management/General. Donors are not likely to find 501c3 tax exempt organizations with a better track record of ensuring donated funds are used to support girls.

5. The facts of “Take Action” programs (Gold/Silver/Bronze Award) present a unique set of circumstances that warrant separate consideration. These programs help develop courage, confidence and character in individual girls, and in addition, often benefit other organizations. To ensure the project supports the 501c3 purpose of GSEM, the Council must ensure that if the project benefits an outside organization, that the values of that organization are consistent with the mission of GSEM. Requests to raise money for a Take Action program will be reviewed and acted-upon individually by the Council. If approved, all funds must be raised as restricted to the specific Take Action project, which must be clearly identified in all solicitations. All funds raised must be remitted to the Council for proper tracking and redistribution for the Take Action project.

¹ *Blue Book of Basic Documents*, Girl Scouts of the USA, 2012 edition, p.21.

TOPIC:	GIRL SCOUT AMBASSADORS AS ADULT LEADERS
DATE:	July 1997 March 2012 (Revised)
AREA:	Girl Development
RATIONALE:	Girl Scout Ambassadors who turn 18 have reached the legal age of majority and are legally considered adults in the state of Missouri.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) guidelines do not allow membership to be transferred from one program level to another during the membership year. However, girls in Girl Scouting move from a girl membership category into an adult membership category at the age of 18 or upon completion of the twelfth grade. These girls continue to retain their Girl Scout Ambassador registration status and can serve in adult leadership roles and may be counted as adults in the girl/adult ratio if they are 18 years of age until the end of the membership year. This does not apply to girls with developmental disabilities who may, if they wish, retain their girl membership until they reach their 21 st birthday or until they complete high school or its equivalent.
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	<p>The Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri encourages and supports Girl Scouts in leadership roles. Many of the Council's summer adult leadership opportunities exist for girls who have moved into the adult category. These summer opportunities include day and resident camp.</p> <p>Girl Scout Ambassadors can serve in adult leadership roles and may be counted as an adult in the girl/adult ratio if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are 18 years old <i>and</i> have completed twelfth grade • Have completed the appropriate adult training(s) • Fulfill the requirements of the specific job description such as Day Camp Unit Leader or Resident Camp Assistant Unit leader.

TOPIC:	GUIDELINES FOR USE OF GIRL SCOUT LOGO
DATE:	April 2009 September 2010 (Revised)
AREA:	Program
RATIONAL:	To provide guidance on the use of the Girl Scout logo
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	<p>The Girl Scout logo or service mark (hereafter logo) is licensed and owned by Girl Scouts of the USA. It is a highly recognized symbol and brand name of the Girl Scout Movement. Its use inside or outside of Girl Scouting should comply fully with GSUSA guidelines.</p> <p>Fully chartered Girl Scout Councils may use the logo when carrying out Girl Scout program and or conducting Girl Scout business. The logo is owned by Girl Scouts of the USA. Girl Scouts of the USA is responsible for legally protecting all its trademarks, e.g. logo, and ensuring their continued integrity. Girl Scout Councils and troops are responsible for protecting the logo and making sure its use complies with guidelines provided by Girl Scouts of the USA.</p> <p>The Girl Scout name and/or logo may be used on items for resale or by persons or groups outside Girl Scouting with permission of the Girl Scouts of the USA. Adapted from <i>What We Stand For. The Leader's Digest and Blue Book of Basic Documents</i> includes the policy.</p>
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri supports this position and offers the following guidelines to troops, organizations, businesses and individuals wanting to use the Girl Scout logo in the promotion of programs, on items for sale by troops, neighborhoods and districts.
PROGRAM PROMOTION:	Program providers must agree to secure written permission from Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri to use the Girl Scout logo on their website, on printed program materials or in brochures or publications. Staff contact: Kathy Dabrowski, Director, Girl Development, Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri.
BUSINESS USE:	A business wanting to use the GS logo on items for sale must be a licensed vendor. This license can be obtained through Girl Scouts of the USA, 420 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10018-2798, ATTN: National Equipment Service.
TROOP USE OF LOGO:	Girl Scout troops wishing to use the logo on fliers, t-shirts, etc. staff contact: Kathryn Kiefer, Chief Communications Officer, Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri, 314.592.2397, 1.800.727.4475, ext. 2397, kkiefer@girlscoutsem.org .
ISSUE OF NON - COMPLIANCE:	Troops, program providers or businesses that do not have permission to use the Girl Scout logo will be asked to remove the logo until the issue of use can be resolved.

TOPIC: HOLD HARMLESS/INDEMNIFICATION PROCEDURES
DATE: JANUARY 2009
SEPTEMBER 2010 (Revised)

AREA: ALL

RATIONALE: To provide guidance to Girl Scout staff and volunteers on the use of Hold Harmless/Indemnification clauses (hereafter release).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri has a long-standing practice of advising Girl Scouts, their parents and adult volunteers and staff not to sign release forms from vendors, program providers, operators and program venues. This Position Paper provides guidance on a change in this process.

THE COUNCIL'S POSITION: Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri approved the following motion at the November 19, 2008 Board of Directors meeting.

“Rather than the Council continuing to be involved in the issue of releases from individual participants or their parents, subordinate units (troop/district/neighborhood) will administer the completion of any “release” required by outside vendors/venues from individual participants or their parents. No change is recommended related to any release required from GSEM (where GSEM is a legal party to the release), and these will continue to be sent to the Service Center for review and signature by the appropriate Service Center management. It should also be noted that the responsibility of the Council and/or subordinate unit to reasonably ensure that the venue we are utilizing is safe for the girls remains unchanged, regardless of who administers and/or signs the actual release.”

1. Any individual /group contracting for program and services for Girl Scout girls and adults is responsible for insuring all *Safety Activity Checkpoints* and GSEM health and safety standards are met and enforced during the activity regardless of who signs the release.
2. GSEM will continue to review and authorize the approval and signing of a release for any activity for which the Council is named as the legal entity and/or contracting entity.
3. Individual releases required by program providers for Troop, group, district and/or neighborhoods (subordinate units) events may be signed by the participant (if of legal age) or the parent or guardian. An adult may not sign for a minor over whom they have no legal authority.

TOPIC:	INTERNET GUIDELINES
DATE:	June 2006 June 2010 (Revised)
AREA:	Program
RATIONALE:	To ensure the safety of girls and adults, through the protection of private and personal information.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	Technology is everywhere. The evolution of the Internet is one of the ways technology is transforming our lives. The Internet is used to gain access to children and adults for the purpose of exploitation. Caution must be used when posting information about girls and adults, their lives and activities to protect them from predators.
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	In order to manage the distribution of personal and Council-licensed information, guidelines will be set in place regarding any transactions taken regarding Council data.
GUIDELINES:	<p>Listed below are procedures that GSEM follows and that any member developing a Girl Scout website must follow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Names, addresses, email addresses and phone numbers of Girl Scout volunteers will not be placed on the Web site. • Girls' names, addresses, email addresses and phone numbers will not be placed on the Web site. • Directions to, addresses and phone numbers of camps will not be included. • Specific information on and directions to events and meetings will not be included. • Volunteers interested in using Girl Scout logos and graphics must contact the Communications department, 314.592.2397, 1.800.727.4475, ext. 2397. Permission to use logos and graphics should be obtained prior to usage. • A website developed by a member should not give the appearance that it is the official site for the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri. • Internet sales of any product sold in GSEM-sponsored product activities, such as Girl Scout cookies and nuts, may not be conducted by anyone at any time. For safety and security reasons, Internet sales for any Girl Scout troop money-earning activities may not be conducted by individual girls, parents or other adults. Monies cannot be collected through the Internet. • Girls can use email and age appropriate Internet functions to let family, friends and former customers know about the sale to collect indications of interest. Girls or their parents should not •

**INTERNET GUIDELINES
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 2**

broadcast e-mails to parental membership lists or place of employment e-mail directories.

- Girls or their parents or a third party may not accept payment for Girl Scout product sold or marketed online.
- Online social networking, use of sites such as (Facebook, Twitter, My Space, YouTube, Flickr) for Girl Scout activities must follow specific age and requirements for that site and have a Girl Scout photo release form signed by parents/guardians. The site must be approved by Council.
- Troops may create websites, but they must abide by the guidelines above. Password-protected areas should not be set up since security of information posted cannot be verified.
- Internet Safety Pledge on www.girlscoutsem.org must be read and signed prior to Internet usage. These are retained by the program organizer.
- Internet Safety Resources: <http://lmk.girlscouts.org> (for girls); <http://letmeknow.girlscouts.org> (for parents/adults)

TOPIC:	INVOLUNTARY REMOVAL OF ADULTS FROM GIRL SCOUT ACTIVITIES
DATE:	January 1993 June 2012 (Updated)
AREA:	Adult Development
RATIONALE:	The use and possession of alcoholic beverages, non-medicinal/non-prescription drugs, controlled substances and carrying of firearms by adults participating in Girl Scout activities needs to be addressed.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	<p>A Council policy states, <i>“The Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri are committed to keeping functions alcohol-free when individuals under 21 years of age are present. Alcoholic beverages may be permitted at adult-only fundraising activities not held on Council-owned property or at other off-site adult activities approved in advance by the Field or Executive Committee. The Council expects adults to serve as responsible role models and to exercise and encourage good judgment at all activities where alcoholic beverages are present and consumed. Non-medicinal drugs and controlled substances are prohibited on Council-owned property and at any Girl Scout activity.”</i></p> <p>All adult participants should be informed of this policy prior to the start of a Girl Scout activity.</p>
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	<p>Adults possessing or consuming alcoholic beverages (at a function where individuals under 21 years of age are present), non-medicinal drugs, controlled substances or firearms at any Girl Scout activity will be asked to leave immediately. If the possession or consumption of any of these items causes the adult to present an immediate threat to her/himself or others, call the police first. The director of the Girl Scout activity should also be contacted.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If the director is unavailable, call the Girl Scout Service Center at 314.592.2300 or 1.800.727.4475. State that you have an emergency and need to speak to the designated Council official immediately. 2. The adult-in-charge must observe the behavior in question. The “behavior” is not limited to actually seeing a person consume alcohol or use a controlled substance. 3. The director of the Girl Scout activity discreetly takes the adult aside and states the Council’s policy on the specific problem.

**INVOLUNTARY REMOVAL OF ADULTS FROM GIRL SCOUT
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 2**

4. If it is determined that the adult has violated the Council's policy, she/he is removed from the site in a quiet manner. If girls are in attendance they may remain and other arrangements for adult supervision and transportation home may be arranged by the adult-in-charge.
5. A written narrative of the event will be compiled by the director of the Girl Scout activity. It will be reviewed by all involved with the incident.

TOPIC:	LICE
DATE:	January 1993 March 2012 (Revised)
AREA:	Girl Development
RATIONALE:	To prevent the spread of lice at any Girl Scout activity.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	Contagious scalp conditions such as lice are a deterrent to the enjoyment and benefit of any program participant. The resulting conditions can cause discomfort, embarrassment and expense for those involved. Lice infestations cut across all socio-economic groups and do not denote a lack of personal cleanliness. Lice can be quickly and easily eliminated.
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	<p>All overnight programs (camping, district, neighborhood, troop and Council events) should involve a check for head lice. The presence of head lice and/or nits will prevent participation in the event.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants should be notified that there will be a check for head lice in the pre-event confirmation. 2. Adults involved with the event should be trained in advance of the event on how to check a participant's scalp for the presence of lice and/or nits. This information is available through the Girl Scout Resource Center and in the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri Event Packet. 3. Adults conducting the head check should wear latex gloves. Using tongue depressors or popsicle sticks (one per each participant), the participants hair should be "COMBED" through and the scalp and head checked for lice and/or nits. 4. Parents of participants showing evidence of lice and/or nits should be notified and the participant should return home until treatment has eliminated lice and/or nits and personal gear has been washed and/or treated. This may take as long as 24 hours to thoroughly remove nits. 5. Program fees are not refunded when a participant arrives with pre-existing condition such as lice and/or nits. 6. Do not plan program activities that require participants to share articles of clothing that come in direct contact with the head, neck, or shoulders, (combs, hats, coats, towels, etc.) 7. In the event of infestation, all clothing, towels and bed linens used by the affected person(s) should be washed in hot water (at least 130 degrees F) and/or dried in a hot dryer for at least 20 to 30 minutes. Combs and brushes should be soaked in hot water (150 degrees, F) for 5 to 10 minutes. For personal items and clothing that cannot be washed at high temperatures, dry-clean or isolate them in a plastic bag for two weeks.

LICE
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 2

8. If the infestation occurs at camp, notify the Camp Supervisor or Camp Director who will arrange for treatment of the facilities.

For all one-day or overnight event programs (troop/group, district, neighborhood, Council events, etc.) the following should be done:

- A. Troop leadership who find the presence of head lice and/or nits should contact the child's parents or guardians and request they make arrangements to take the child home for treatment immediately. Adults who may have contracted lice should remove themselves from the activity and pursue treatment.
- B. Leadership should move the person away from the others in attendance discreetly until parents or guardians arrive.
- C. Participants may return to the troop meetings the next day after treatment has eliminated the lice and/or nits. They will be discreetly checked again. If any lice or nits are found they will be sent home again for treatment.

General Information:

When contacting the parents and guardians remind them that lice are bugs like many other bugs. Mosquito's bite, flies bother us and butterflies land on us and fly away. Lice land in our hair and spread unless we use some type of treatment to get rid of them. Any child can get head lice

Participants found with lice or nits must complete a treatment to eliminate them before returning to troop or group activities. Participants will be checked when returning to activities.

Any items that may have been infected should be cleaned or destroyed to stop the spread to other participants. Remind participants not to share hats, scarves, combs and brushes. Lice can live on these things and can infect or spread to other people for 48 to 55 hours.

Parents seeking treatment information should be directed to the community health department and/or family physician.

TOPIC: OUTDOOR GIRL SCOUT ACTIVITIES DURING MODERN FIREARMS DEER HUNTING SEASON

DATE: March 2001
May 2012 (Revised)

AREA: Camping Services

RATIONALE: To protect the health, safety and security of girl and adult members during the Modern Firearms Deer Hunting Season.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: In January 2000 a Hunting Season Task Force was established to research legislation and guidelines related to hunting season(s) and to review options available to the Council that would allow the camps to be open during deer hunting while ensuring the health and safety of campers.

At the April 2000 Representative Assembly meeting, the Hunting Season Task Force reported its findings and solicited input from the membership regarding troop camping during deer hunting season(s).

After consideration from the Camp Committee and the membership the Board of Directors approved the following recommendation on January 17, 2001.

THE COUNCIL'S POSITION: To ensure the health and safety of all girl and adult members it is recommended that all Council-owned camp properties be closed during modern firearms deer hunting season and special managed hunts; and to maintain consistency, outdoor program activities including camping on non-Council-owned property be restricted in areas that may be impacted by modern firearms deer hunting.

The Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri will provide additional resources and alternative programming during the restricted time period.

Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri Camps Cedarledge, Fiddlecreek and Tuckaho will be closed the two weekends proceeding the Thanksgiving holiday for the Modern Firearms Deer Hunting Season. Camps will be closed during any Managed Hunt(s) and the youth portion of Modern Firearms Deer Hunting season conducted by the Missouri Department of Conservation. The dates of the Managed Hunt(s) and the youth portion season are announced by the Missouri Department of Conservation each year after June 1st. The Council will not confirm any Council, district or neighborhood events until the dates of the Managed Hunt(s) are available.

**OUTDOOR GIRL SCOUT ACTIVITIES DURING MODERN FIREARMS
DEER HUNTING SEASON
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 2**

Applications for camping trips on non-Council-owned sites during Modern Firearms Deer Hunting Season will be considered only if the site is in an area where Modern Firearms Deer Hunting, youth portion season or Managed Hunts will not be taking place.

TOPIC:	PRESSURIZED FUEL APPLIANCES
DATE:	January 1994 March 2012 (Revised)
AREA:	Camping Services
RATIONALE:	Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) encourages the use of camp stoves whenever appropriate. Activity checkpoints for their use appear in <i>Safety Activity Checkpoints</i> under Outdoor Cooking. Guidelines for the safe use of pressurized fuel appliances in this Council have been established.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	<p>Concerns about the environment and energy conservation caused GSUSA to reconsider its position on the use of pressurized fuel appliances. In the past, use of wood fires was advocated, and use of all other fuels discouraged. However, environmental damage from wood gathering and building of fire circles has resulted from continued and extensive use of wood. Campfires are now prohibited or restricted in many national parks and forests. The American Camp Association allows the use of pressurized fuel appliances if the user demonstrates competency in their use.</p> <p>In the past, this Council prohibited the use of pressurized equipment of any kind, based on a requirement of its previous insurer. The Council's current insurer does not impose this restriction on the Council.</p>
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Girl Scout Adults may use or supervise the use of pressurized fuel lanterns and stoves provided that they have received training from this Council in the safe use of such equipment. Individuals who wish to utilize pressurized fuel appliances must complete the video training program, "<i>Campfires and Pressurized Fuels Video Program.</i>" Completion of this program does not take the place of reading and following manufacturer's instructions. Individuals are responsible for being competent in the use of their own equipment. 2. An adult who is a current Level I First Aider must be present at the cooking site while a pressurized fuel stove is in use. 3. Girl members may use pressurized fuel lanterns and stoves. The skill level and age of the girl is considered. The intent is to provide girls with a safe, positive program experience.

**PRESSURIZED FUEL APPLIANCES
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 2**

The following guidelines outline the Council's position on girl use of the equipment.

- Girl Scout Daisy and Brownies may not use and operate pressurized fuel appliances. Adults may operate pressurized fuel appliances at program activities for Girl Scout Daisy and Brownies, but are not to involve the girls in their operation.
 - Girl Scout Juniors may use propane or butane appliances under the supervision of an adult who has been trained in the safe use of such equipment. The use of pressurized fuel appliances fueled by liquid fuels that need to be primed is not recommended as the goal is to provide Girl Scout Juniors with an opportunity to learn the safe use of equipment fueled by propane or butane.
 - Girl Scout Cadettes, having progressed through the use of propane or butane appliances, can use liquid fuel appliances that do not require priming. Girl Scout Cadettes may use these appliances only under the supervision of an adult trained in the safe use of pressurized fuel appliances. This provides Girl Scout Cadettes the opportunity to become proficient in the use of the equipment.
 - Girl Scout Senior and Ambassadors with appropriate experience and training can use pressurized fuel appliances under the supervision of an adult trained in the safe use of pressurized fuel appliances.
 - Girl Scout Ambassadors who successfully complete the "Campfires and Pressurized Fuels Appliances" video program may not use or supervise the use of pressurized fuel appliances without adult supervision until they register as a Girl Scout Adult.
4. Fuels approved for use are: wood, charcoal, kerosene, propane, butane, isobutene, white gas (Coleman fuel) and sterno. No liquid fire starters of any kind may be used.

**PRESSURIZED FUEL APPLIANCES
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 3**

5. If Girl Scouts elect to utilize pressurized fuel appliances, they will be responsible for providing and maintaining them. The Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri will not provide or maintain pressurized fuel appliances.
6. Liquid-fuel lanterns must be hung from hooks provided for this purpose at Council-owned sites. Lanterns that are lit are not to be carried by persons who are walking.
7. Only one gallon of flammable liquid plus what is in the cook stove can be stored at each individual camping unit. Additional fuel should not be stored in cars or anywhere else in camp.
8. No pressurized fuel heaters will be used at Girl Scout functions.
9. Pressurized fuel appliances may not be operated inside any tent or building.
10. No facilities for disposing of empty fuel canisters exist at camp. Empty fuel canisters are to be retained by the troop and taken out of camp for proper disposal. Canisters must not be placed with other trash and left at camp.
11. Procedures for verifying that an adult using pressurized fuel is certified are:

Troop Camping on Council-Owned Site

- Troop leaders will be asked to indicate on the C-9, Application For Overnight or Weekend Troop Camping at Council-owned camp, their intent to use pressurized fuel appliances.
- A troop's plan to use pressurized fuel appliances will be indicated on the Camp Supervisor's troop schedule.
- The Camp Supervisor will verify certification of adults upon arrival at camp.
- If a troop is on Council-owned property and a Camp Supervisor is not present, the Camp Ranger will verify certification.

Day Camp

- In order to coordinate overall program goals and implementation, unit leaders will advise the Day Camp Director of intent to use pressurized fuel appliances. The Day Camp Director will verify certification when making program plans.
- If the day camp is on Council-owned property and a Camp Supervisor is on-site he/she also will verify certification.

Family Camp

- Pressurized fuel appliances may be used at Family Camp.
- Participants will be asked to indicate on registration form their intent to use pressurized fuel appliances.
- The Family Camp Director will verify certification at check-in.

Resident Camp

- Pressurized fuel appliances will not be used at resident camp.

Non-Council-Owned Site

- If a troop is camping on a non-Council-owned site, they will indicate they will be using pressurized fuel on the C9-A, Application for All Camping on Non-Council Owned Sites, form.
 - A copy of the certification must be attached to the application.
 - The Director, Camping Services & Facilities will review the C9-A form for name, certification and appropriate troop age level.
12. Pressurized fuel equipment may not be a part of or stored in district equipment. Leftover funds from day camps or events may not be used to purchase pressurized fuel equipment.

TOPIC:	SEARCH OF PERSONAL PROPERTY (formerly Contraband Material and Concealed Weapons at Girl Scout Activities)
DATE:	September 1992 June 2010 (Revised) September 2010 (Revised) March 2012 (Revised)
AREA:	Girl Development
RATIONALE:	To provide guidelines for personal property searches when, with reasonable cause, an individual (whether girl, employee or volunteer) is believed to have violated Council policies and have brought something onto camp property or to a Girl Scout activity, such as alcohol, drugs or weapons. Searches are conducted only to protect the health and safety of all Girl Scouts participating in the activity. Suspicion alone does not justify the initiation of a search.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	<p>Contraband material is defined as illegal or prohibited smuggled goods, i.e., firearms, concealed weapons, knives (not Girl Scout issue), alcoholic beverages (when individuals under the age of 21 are present) non-medicinal drugs, non-prescribed medications and controlled substances.</p> <p>A policy of the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri states: "GSEM expects adults to serve as responsible role models and to exercise and encourage good judgment at all activities. Girl Scout volunteers shall not drink or be under the influence of alcohol during Girl Scout activities when girls are present. An exception to this policy includes a limited number of GSEM-sponsored events for adults where girls may be participating as speakers, greeters, flag ceremony color guard, etc. and whose parents will be notified, in advance of even participation, that alcohol is being served to adults. Non-medicinal drugs and controlled substances are prohibited on Council-owned property and at any Girl Scout activity." (<i>Volunteer Essentials, p.7</i>).</p> <p>If for any reason an adult or girl does make the wrong choice by bringing contraband materials to an event or activity, the decision may threaten the safety of girls and adults when on Council-owned property or at a Girl Scout event. If this should happen, common sense should be used when addressing the problem and guidelines are provided to assist those as needed.</p> <p>When, with reasonable cause, an individual (whether girl, volunteer or employee) is believed to have violated the Council policies and brought prohibited items such as alcohol, drugs or weapons to program activities, the Council will reserve the right to conduct voluntary searches with reasonable cause including, but not limited to: parking areas, employee and volunteer vehicles, living quarters, and work areas. These searches may also include bags, luggage, backpacks, purses and other items brought onto the camp property or to a program activity.</p> <p>Girls and adults will be expected to cooperate in these searches. Refusal to cooperate will result in appropriate disciplinary action.</p>

SEARCH OF PERSONAL PROPERTY
(formerly Contraband Material And
Concealed Weapons at Girl Scout Activities)
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 2

THE COUNCIL'S POSITION: The Council will reserve the right to conduct voluntary searches with reasonable cause on camp premises or activity site including, but not limited to: parking areas, employee or volunteer vehicles, living quarters, and work areas. These searches may also include bags, luggage, backpacks, purses and other items brought onto the camp property or activity site.

Girls, employees and volunteers will be expected to cooperate in these searches. Refusal to cooperate will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

INTERNAL PROCEDURES:

1. Prior approval must be received before a search is conducted. Administrative Staff Members (Camp Supervisor, Event Director, Camp Director, Camp Ranger) are to notify the Director, Camping Services and Facilities (for programs on camp property) or Director, Girl Development prior to conducting any type of search proceedings. Other Girl Scout Service Center staff may also be involved in the notification process and will be notified by either the Director, Girl Development or Director, Camping Services and Facilities.
2. The appropriate Girl Scout Service Center staff member will give instructions on how a search is to be conducted.
3. Searches can be conducted if, but not limited to, the following reasons:
 - a. Visual observations of contraband material by girls, employees or volunteers.
 - b. Observation of signs & symptoms of alcohol consumption. (Smell of breath, blood shot eyes, impaired motor skills, etc.)
 - c. Observation of signs & symptoms of illegal drug consumption. (Unusual behavior, impaired motor skills, unusual smells, etc.)

Formal searches are not to be conducted to locate "lost & found" items at camp. Guidance on how to handle these situations should be taken from the Girl Scout Service Center staff.

4. Searches of personal property are to be conducted voluntarily with permission of the girl, employee or volunteer. Refusal to cooperate can result in dismissal from the program activity. In the case of a minor child or staff member, all parents/guardians listed on a girl's health history form will be informed.

SEARCH OF PERSONAL PROPERTY
(formerly Contraband Material And
Concealed Weapons at Girl Scout Activities)
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 3

5. At least two adults must be present during a search. Both individuals should be an administrator of the program activity (i.e. Camp Director, Event Director, Camp Supervisor, Staff Advisor, etc.)
6. Review of items should be done in privacy, away from other girls, employees or volunteers.
7. Searches are to be conducted of an individual's items only. At no time are searches to be conducted on an individual's clothing items on their body or their body itself. There will be no searching of pockets, turning out of clothing or disrobing during the process of a search.
8. The girl, employee or volunteer whose items are being reviewed should be the only individual handling items within bags, purses, luggage, work areas, living quarters, etc. Only the individual owning such items should touch equipment, luggage, etc. The adults conducting the search **should not touch** or move objects.
9. If illegal contraband materials are found, and local law enforcement authorities need to be contacted, a staff member will need to remain with the girl/employee/volunteer and their gear until further directed by law enforcement. Care should be taken not to interfere with criminal investigation proceedings if necessary.

Contraband material is defined as illegal or prohibited smuggled goods, i.e. firearms, concealed weapons, knives (not Girl Scout issued), alcoholic beverages (when individuals under the age of 21 are present), non-medicinal drugs, non-prescribed medications and controlled substances.

10. An incident report will be completed by both adults witnessing the search procedures as soon as possible, regardless of the outcome of the search.

**SPECIFIC TO
SUMMER CAMP:**

11. A statement will be included in the information packet for summer camp activities provided to parents prior to the arrival at camp. Policy will read: *Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri (GSEM) reserves the right to conduct searches on camp property including, but not limited to: parking areas, vehicles, and living quarters if GSEM has reason to believe that a camper has violated Council policies and has brought prohibited items to camp such as alcohol, drugs or weapons. These searches may include any items brought to camp for an event or activity, including but not limited to bags, luggage, backpacks, purses, coolers and other items.*

SEARCH OF PERSONAL PROPERTY
(formerly Contraband Material And
Concealed Weapons at Girl Scout Activities)
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 4

Campers will be expected to cooperate in these searches. Refusal to cooperate may result in dismissal from the camp program and a forfeiture of all camp fees.

12. The statement will be publicly posted at the camp administrative offices during each summer capon season.
13. Camp staff will notify all parents or guardians listed on the health history form if/when a search has been conducted, the reason behind the search and what the outcome was.

TOPIC:	SENSITIVE ISSUES
DATE:	Approved by Program Committee – February 21, 1990 Approved by Board of Directors – March 12, 1990 July 1997 (Revised) June 1998 (Revised) June 2002 (Revised) June 2003 (Revised) June 2004 (Revised) May 2005 (Revised) May 2007 (Revised) March 2008 (Revised) June 2010 (Revised)
AREA:	Girl Development
RATIONALE:	Sensitive issues are those subjects that may be considered sensitive or controversial, i.e., human sexuality and personal values and beliefs on religion. Other issues are determined on a case-by-case basis. Once identified, they must be addressed in a clear and consistent manner by staff and volunteers to prevent controversy.
BACKGROUND	<p>In 1985, programs and program resources addressing sensitive issues have been introduced to Girl Scouts and leaders. While not all of these resources solely focused on sensitive issues, some touched on a sensitive topic. These programs included information on substance abuse prevention, AIDS Education Awareness, child abuse prevention, personal safety, and puberty.</p> <p>If a sensitive topic or discussion arises, those involved should follow the guidelines for such program activities that have been approved by Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri.</p>
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	<p>Following are the guidelines for sensitive issues program activities approved by the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri is an information-providing, informal education program for girls grades K-12. It is not an advocacy or crisis intervention organization, and does not take a position or develop materials related to human sexuality, birth control or abortion. Information presented will be factual. 2. Those involved in developing a program that addresses a sensitive issue must inform their staff advisor prior to sharing information with the membership. The staff advisor is likely the Community Development Manager for the Area or the Regional Program Manager. The staff advisor will work with volunteers through the program development and approval process to ensure consistency with Council and GSUSA positions.

**SENSITIVE ISSUES
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 2**

3. Parents of girls should be informed in detail about the program, whether it is offered Council-wide or at the group/troop level, and must give written approval for their daughter to participate. For some issues, a parent preview must be offered. Parents also may be involved in parallel sessions of certain programs. Parents may choose for their daughter to participate in all or part of a program.
4. Professionally trained personnel will be used to present sensitive issues at council-level program activities. Existing workshops or courses offered in the community on presenting program activities dealing with sensitive issues may be used as a professional training substitute, if approved by Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri.
5. Those persons willing to adhere to national and local Girl Scout policies and program standards will be selected as consultants to present sensitive issues program activities. The selection of consultants will be based upon their ability to provide factual information.
6. Council volunteers and staff will be made aware of all activities and kept informed throughout each stage of development. Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri must approve the use of materials that are of a sensitive nature.
7. Parent meeting or workshops will be provided as a support to interested parents. Parents are encouraged to reinforce the concepts taught during the event at home.
8. In accordance with Missouri state laws, all serious incidents must be reported. Some examples of serious incidents include: mental, physical or sexual abuse; suicide attempts or warning signs; drug use/abuse; or any other reportable circumstance. If you become aware of a serious incident contact your staff advisor immediately.

TOPIC:	SMOKING GUIDELINES FOR ADULTS PARTICIPATING IN GIRL SCOUT ACTIVITIES
DATE:	January 1993 March 2012 (Revised)
AREA:	Girl Development
RATIONALE:	Adults who smoke should think carefully about the example they are providing and whether they are showing a true concern for the health and welfare of the Girl Scouts for whom they are responsible. (See <i>Safety Activity Checkpoints</i>)
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	Girl Scout Leaders/Advisors are responsible for providing a healthy and safe environment for Girl Scout activities. Girls learn about health and safety from their Leaders/Advisors and other adults around them. To be effective role models, Leaders/Advisors must act in a manner that shows concern for the health and welfare of individuals. Thousands of Americans die every year from the effects of smoking. Research shows that cigarette smoking is harmful not only to smokers, but also to non-smokers. Cigarettes are a safety hazard and have been known to start fires.
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	<p>Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri does not recommend smoking for its membership. The following guidelines should be followed for those adults who do choose to smoke:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GSEM expects strict adherence to applicable local, state and federal laws pertaining to smoke-free environment. 2. Smoking by girls or adult participants will not be allowed at any activity sponsored by GSEM 3. Smoking in the presence of girls is prohibited. When adults who smoke are accompanying girls on an activity, they should plan for time away from the girls to smoke. Proper supervision must be maintained during their absence. 4. On Council-owned properties and at Girl Scout sponsored activities, it is expected that adults will not smoke along trails, in tents, cabins, cooking shelters, latrines or other buildings except in designated smoking areas listed below. Fire circles are the safest areas in which to smoke at camp when girls are not present in the unit.

**SMOKING GUIDELINES FOR ADULTS PARTICIPATING IN
GIRL SCOUT ACTIVITIES
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 2**

5. Meetings that involve adults may be scheduled so that a time is provided for those who do smoke to retire to a designated place for at least 10 minutes during each two hour period.
6. Districts and Neighborhoods may designate smoking areas for adult participants in keeping with guidelines 3 and 4 above and if not using locations in guideline 7.
7. Additional designated smoking areas for troop camping are:

Cedarledge	-Staff House Porch
Fiddlecreek	-Back porch stair, lower level at the Dining Hall
Tuckaho	-Barn Porch
	-Cricket Corner Lodge Porch
8. The Girl Scout Service Centers are smoke-free. Smoking is not allowed at any meetings held in the Girl Scout Service Centers.
9. Smoking is not permitted in any Council owned/leased/rented vehicle.

TOPIC:	SMOKING GUIDELINES FOR GIRLS PARTICIPATING IN GIRL SCOUT ACTIVITIES
DATE:	January 1993 March 2012 (Revised)
AREA:	Girl Development
RATIONALE:	The Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri recommends that girls do not smoke. This standard was adopted June 17, 1998 for the Girl Scout Council of Greater St. Louis. "Smoking by girl participants will not be allowed at any activity sponsored by the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri."
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	Thousands of Americans die every year from the effects of smoking. Research shows that cigarette smoking is harmful not only to smokers, but also to non-smokers. Cigarettes are a safety hazard and have been know to start fires.
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	The Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri does not recommend smoking for its membership. Girl participants who do not follow the standard will be asked to leave the activity.

TOPIC:	SUBORDINATE UNIT (TROOPS/NEIGHBORHOODS/DISTRICTS) BANK ACCOUNTS
DATE:	March, 2012
AREA:	Finance/Girl Development
RATIONALE:	To provide Subordinate Units with guidance on how to establish and maintain a bank account for the benefit of their girls.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION	<p>In 2009, on the advice of outside counsel and GSUSA, the GSEM Board of Directors acknowledged that the Council legally owns all Subordinate Unit bank accounts. That action precipitating this change in direction resulted when a bank exercised “right of offset” whereby it charged one troops account for an overdraft in another troop’s account. This is legal under Missouri law because in the standard Girl Scout legal structure, all Subordinate Units operate under the Council’s federal employer identification number.</p> <p>Funds in Subordinate Unit accounts continue to be for the support of the girl members, but GSEM is now required to exercise additional controls over the establishment of Subordinate Unit bank accounts. Our external auditors have determined that because GSEM has greater liability for oversight and monitoring these accounts, GSEM now has increased responsibilities to establish and maintain procedures that protect the funds in each Subordinate Unit account against actions caused by any other Subordinate Unit.</p> <p>Since 2009, we have actively evaluated banking for Subordinate Units. During this period, a number of significant events impacting Subordinate Unit banking were also taking place. Our findings and the banking changes impacting Subordinate Units were vetted with the Field Committee, Finance Committee, Membership Connections Committee and the Board of Directors.</p>
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	As the owner of Subordinate Unit bank accounts, the Council has established a <u>standard</u> set of procedures for opening and maintaining Subordinate Unit bank accounts, along with policies the operation of these accounts. With over 3,600 Subordinate Units, it is not feasible for GSEM to review and negotiate separate packages of account documents for hundreds of different banks. We have worked with our main bank, and some other Girl Scout Councils to develop the attached set of <u>standard</u> documents that have been accepted by numerous financial institutions for Girl Scout Subordinate Unit accounts. Financial institutions wishing to host a Subordinate Unit bank account for Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri must accept the <u>standard</u> document package provided by the Council.

**SUBORDINATE UNIT (TROOPS/NEIGHBORHOODS/DISTRICTS) BANK ACCOUNTS
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 2**

TO OPEN A SUBORDINATE UNIT BANK ACCOUNT:

For Subordinate Units to open a bank account, they are to obtain the account opening package from the *Director, Girl Development* at GSEM. This package contains the following documents which are to be provided to the financial institution the Subordinate Unit recommends to host its account:

1. Standard financial institution cover letter;
2. Resolution by GSEM Board of Directors authorizing the account;
3. Certification and/or waiver for financial institutions providing online account access or a debit card.

POLICIES GOVERNING USE OF SUBORDINATE UNIT ACCOUNTS:

Following are some examples of changes to policies/procedures related to Subordinate Unit bank accounts.

1. In today's environment of rapidly changing fees for Subordinate Unit bank accounts, these fees are better negotiated directly between the Subordinate Unit and their bank. Because the Council cannot add net value to this process (over the material cost incurred with 3,600+ individual Subordinate Unit accounts), this is an activity in which the Council will not be involved.
2. Reviews and internal controls over the funds in Subordinate Unit bank accounts will be materially tightened to meet requirements established by our external auditors;
3. The use of a corporate debit card issued as part of any Subordinate Unit bank account will be prohibited unless the issuing financial institution will waive its right to recover over-drafts from any other GSEM account it hosts. We recognize that because this certification will waive the bank's ability to apply the "right of offset" against any other account under the common GSEM EIN, it is unlikely banks will agree;
4. Banks holding Subordinate Unit accounts may not approve over-drafts, or include automatic overdraft protection on any Subordinate Unit bank account;
5. In any case where a Subordinate Unit's bank account is charged to cover deficiencies in any other account under our EIN, the Council will reimburse the amount charged. In effect, the Council will "buy" that debt, and will aggressively pursue collection from the responsible party(ies);
6. In any case where the Council covers a deficiency in a Subordinate Unit account at the request of the bank holding the account, the Council will aggressively pursue collection from the responsible party(ies);

**SUBORDINATE UNIT (TROOPS/NEIGHBORHOODS/DISTRICTS) BANK ACCOUNTS
POSITION PAPERS
PAGE 3**

7. In any cases of theft, misappropriation or financial impropriety related to a Subordinate Unit bank account, the Council will generally replace the misappropriated funds provided provisions of the policy approved by the Board on November 30, 2011 are met, and the Council will aggressively
8. pursue collection and prosecution of all party(ies) responsible;

There are a number of current policies/procedures related to Subordinate Unit bank accounts that will NOT be impacted by this change, including:

1. Funds in a Subordinate Unit account are intended for the use of the girl members **while they are members** of the troop.
2. The Council will only consider seizing the funds in an **active Subordinate Unit** to protect funds from theft/misappropriation, or to ensure they are available to the girls entitled to utilize them.
3. Subordinate Units will retain the right to select the financial institution for their banking, provided all accounts are federally ensured and are established and maintained according to GSEM policies;
4. Subordinate Units will manage day-to-day relationships related to their accounts directly with their financial institution;
5. Council staff will not be authorized signers on any Subordinate Unit bank accounts;
6. No credit cards/loans related to any Subordinate Unit bank account can be issued;
Funds in a Subordinate Unit account may not be pledged to secure any loan.

TOPIC:	USE OF EARTHBALLS
DATE:	January 1993 May 2007 (Revised) June 2012 (updated)
AREA:	Emerson Resource Center
RATIONALE:	Inappropriate and unsupervised use of earthballs in program activities is a safety and liability hazard.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:	Inappropriate use of earthballs has caused several potentially serious accidents. To date, earthballs have been removed from the Emerson Resource Center and resident camp inventories.
THE COUNCIL'S POSITION:	Because of the safety and liability concerns, the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri discourages the use of earthballs at all Girl Scout events and recommends their removal from all District Equipment inventories by the end of 1992.

TOPIC: USE OF FIFTEEN-PASSENGER VANS

DATE: June 2001
March 2012 (Revised)

AREA: Girl Development

RATIONALE: The use of fifteen-passenger vans is prohibited by Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Fifteen-passenger vans have traditionally been rented and utilized for Council-sponsored events and resident camp. District, Neighborhoods and/or troops also have rented fifteen-passenger vans for trips and event transportation.

Fifteen-passenger vans have an increased risk of rollover when fully loaded according to an April 19, 2001 Consumer Advisory from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. When a fifteen-passenger van is fully loaded, the van's center of gravity shifts up and to the back, increasing the risk of rollovers, especially in the event of a panic maneuver by the driver.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recommends that the vans should be operated only by experienced drivers. This statement was prompted by a study of a series of rollovers involving college sports teams. No special license or experience is presently required to operate a fifteen-passenger van. Federal Law prohibits the purchase of such vans for schools. No such prohibition exists for vehicles used to transport college students or other passengers.

THE COUNCIL'S POSITION: As of October 1, 2008, the use of owned or leased fifteen-passenger vans for any Girl Scout activity including transportation of troop members is prohibited.

TOPIC: USE OF HELIUM-FILLED LATEX OR MYLAR BALLOONS

DATE: January 1990

AREA: Girl Development

RATIONALE: To promote environmentally sound activities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Helium-filled latex or mylar (silver) balloons are causing an environmental problem across the country. So much so that in the following news release, * The National Park Service announces new restrictions: "NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RESTRICTS BALLOONS". New restrictions on the use of helium-filled balloons within national parks were recently announced by the National Park Service (NPS) in a press release calling attention to the growing evidence that balloon litter causes severe problems to marine wildlife. James M. Ridenour, NPS director, noted that national seashores are "essentially marine sanctuaries, and we must protect and preserve the wildlife in undisturbed settings." The NPS will not permit "the sale or use of helium-filled latex or mylar (silver) balloons unless they can be controlled or recovered," the release stated. According to a report by the Interagency Task Force on Persistent Marine Debris, latex balloons take 3 to 5 months to deteriorate on land when exposed to East Coast summer conditions, perhaps longer in winter. Also, scientists have documented several cases of endangered species suffering fatal blockages because of balloon ingestion.

THE COUNCIL'S POSITION: Because of environmental concerns, it is recommended that the use of helium-filled latex or mylar balloons be thoroughly evaluated before deciding to plan an activity that involves a balloon launch. If a group decides to use balloons, every effort should be made to do so in a responsible manner. The use of air-filled balloons is always appropriate. In all situations, the impact to the environment should be considered before plans are finalized.

**Reprinted with permission from GSUSA News, December, 1989*