Camping Frequently Asked Questions

Q Why doesn't the lock open? (For padlocks at all camps)
   A Please verify you have the latest code (see your GSCNC Reservation confirmation email). Front gate and high adventure codes at all camps will be changing on 1/1/2017. Note that some padlocks “line up” the digits on the top row rather than the middle row. Squeeze the hasp into the lock until you feel the click, then pull outward-downward to release.

Q Why is there no water coming from the hydrant?
   A The water could be shut off for the winter season to prevent frozen pipes. Check the GSCNC Reservations website, or contact camping services for more information.
   A If the water is turned on, lift handle all the way up and wait a minute for water to start flowing.

Q Are there cots in the shelters?
   A The following camps have cots: Coles Trip (ONLY Aqua side), May Flather, Potomac Woods, White Rock, and Winona. The following camps do not have cots: Aquasco, Brighton Woods, Coles Trip (Arrowhead Side), and Crowell. Cots are not available in the lodges at any of our camp properties.

Q The gate is unlocked – should I lock it when I go past?
   A Yes – Gates should be locked at all times.

Q The archery lock doesn't work, I put the gate code in it several times.
   A High adventure has a different code than the front gate – please check your confirmation email to find the correct code. High adventure codes will also change on 1/1/2017.

Q Where can we put tents up?
   A Feel free to pitch tents any safe place on our GSCNC properties. However, please do not pitch tents on a unit that was reserved by another troop.

Q Where do we take our trash?
   A Please empty all trash cans and put all trash in the camp dumpster.

Q Is the water drinkable?
   A Yes, the water at all of our camps is drinkable.

Q Are there pots and pans in the kitchens?
   A ‘Be Prepared’ is the Girl Scout motto – please bring all necessary equipment or reserve it through our Dorr Avenue equipment center via the GSCNC Reservations website. Contact the camping department for more information.

Q Is there toilet paper, trash bags or soap at camp?
   A Troops should bring their own toilet paper, trash bags, paper towels, soap, paper products, and cleaning sprays. These items are not provided.

Q Is there a refrigerator in the unit?
   A As a rule of thumb, only Camp White Rock has refrigerators in each unit. The other camps have refrigerators in the lodges only. Please check the GSCNC camping reservation website for specific site information.

Q How many can sleep in the covered wagons / glen shelters / tents?
   A Please check the GSCNC camping reservation website for capacities and specific number of structures.

Q How many life jackets are there?
   A There are enough life jackets/PFDs for the capacity that is listed when you make the High Adventure reservation.

Q How many canoes/kayaks are there?
   A Please check the GSCNC camping reservation website to see how many people you can take canoeing/kayaking at a specific camp.

Q What is the address of the camp?

Updated November 2016
A The address can be found in your original confirmation email. Please scroll down to the yellow highlighted section where you will see a link to the Camp Fact Sheet, a downloadable PDF containing the camp address, gate code, map, caretaker contact info, and more.

Q What is the phone number at camp?
A The emergency phone number at camp is found in your Camp Fact Sheet site details document. You will find the link to this downloadable fact sheet in your original confirmation email. Please be aware that only the main emergency phone listed in your Camp Fact Sheet document has year-round service.

Q How many cars can the parking lot hold?
A Each camp's parking lot capacity varies from camp to camp. Two cars are allowed per unit. Carpooling is always suggested. If you have questions about capacity, please phone the caretaker or make a site visit to camp beforehand.

Q Where can the men use the restroom?
A If in a lodge with a separate men's restroom, men can use that restroom. In a lodge with only one restroom, men can use the restroom when no girls are in the restroom. When using a latrine, please designate one stall to be “Men Only”. Men should have specific restroom times that are separate from girls.

Q Is there letterboxing/geocaching at camp?
A The only camp that has an established letterboxing course is Camp Winona. There are no established geocaches at any of our camps; if you would like to letterbox or geocache, your troop will have to set them up yourself. You can rent the Letterboxing or Geocaching Program Kit from Dorr Avenue to help you get started; contact the camping department for more details.

Q Do we have to bring firewood?
APlentiful free firewood is available at each unit, and more is in in the woodshed, which is marked on the camp map. Please restock your unit with wood before departing.

Q Why are the capacities at Camp Crowell so small – Firefly Lodge can hold more than 30 people!
A Due to Fairfax County regulations, Camp Crowell has a very strict capacity of 135 people at camp at any one time (the exceptions to this rule are day camps and service unit encampments). So the capacities listed online are the capacities that you should stick to. If you would like more information, please contact the camping department.

Q Do I have to bring rakes, shovels or buckets?
A There are rakes, shovels and buckets at every site. You can also rent fire buckets from our Dorr Avenue equipment center via the GSCNC reservation system website.

Q Where do we go when the bathrooms are winterized?
A It depends on the site; if the bathroom for your site is winterized, please go to the nearest latrine. For information on which sites have winterized bathrooms, look on the GSCNC reservation system website or contact the camping department.

Q Where is a store close by in case I need something?
A The location of the nearest store is located in your Camp Fact Sheet document which can be downloaded from the link in your original confirmation email – the same document that has the gate code and address.

Q Are there any trails?
A Trails are marked on the camp maps; call the camp caretaker for more information about specific trails.

Q Do I need a lifeguard to go in the river?
A Yes, you need a lifeguard any time you are in the water.

Q Can I get out this winter if it snows?
A Camp will stay open in the winter; just check with camping services to see which units are closed for winter, have seasonal water, and other important information.

Q Can I drive my car down to the river?
A Please walk to the river.

Q Can I park my car in the campsite?
A You may park up to two cars per unit; all other cars must be parked in the main parking lot indicated on your map.

Updated November 2016
How many bows and arrows are at camp?
A Please check the GSCNC reservation system for high adventure capacities; there are enough bows/arrows for a group of that capacity to shoot.

Do we need a trained person to use the ropes course?
A Yes, you must have an instructor who is certified to teach the ropes course. Please contact the camping department for more information or if you do not have a high adventure instructor.

Is there a fireplace in the shelters / lodges?
A Please check the GSCNC reservation system for specific information about which units have fireplaces. Most outdoor units will have an outside fire pit at the site.

Are there any projects that my troop can do?
A Yes! Service projects are listed by camp on the camping website. For specific projects, contact the camp caretaker.

Which units have water?
A Please check the GSCNC reservation system for information about water at units.

Can I rent the pool?
A No; the pools are only used for sleep-away camp and are not available for troop rental. The exception is Camp White Rock during our summer weekend rentals; please contact the camping department for more information.

Where do I go in an emergency?
A Check your downloadable Camp Fact Sheet document for the camp emergency evacuation plan and shelter, as well as directions to the local hospital.

Is there already an evacuation route or plan at the camp?
A Yes; each camp has an emergency evacuation shelter. Check the camp map for specific location.

What programs are available at your camp?
A Look at GSCNC.org under Camping to see the high adventure offerings at each camp location, or contact the camping department for additional ideas.

What other programs are available in the area near your camp?
A Go to our website to find out local program opportunities – under ‘Our Camp Properties’, click ‘Program Opportunities’ to find local program information.

How do I keep my troop warm in cold nights while sleeping in glen shelters or tents?
A We would recommend lots of layering. If you’re in a glen shelter, you might find it helpful to bring a plastic ground cover to put on the floor to stop the cold air from coming up, and make sure to close the window curtains. Bring space blankets (the crinkly silver kind) and put them under and above their sleeping bags. Eat a hearty dinner of stew and make sure you drink lots of hot cocoa.

Can I use the commercial kitchen or do I need training?
A At all camps, the commercial kitchen is closed for troop camping and only open for service unit encampments and core camps. At Camp White Rock, to use the commercial kitchen you need a ServSafe kitchen certification. At all camps other than White Rock, you do not need specific training for the commercial kitchen; the caretaker just needs to show you how to use the equipment.

Can a food company deliver the food for my big camping event?
A Yes; please inform the camping department about your plan and which company you would like to use. You will need to arrange for someone to meet the truck at camp and let them in the kitchen; the caretakers are not on camp at all times, so make sure to make prior arrangements.

If you have any other questions, don’t hesitate to contact the camping department at 202-534-3793! We’d be happy to help you!