

Scouting for Food - Reminder Signs

This is one of the ancillary jobs for Scouting for Food, and qualifies participating Scouts as having participated in this service event. It is open only to those Scouts who are completely unable to make either bag distribution or bag collection day because of sports or other irreconcilable conflicts. This job generally takes between 2 - 3 hours. We need three separate sign installing Crews, so a minimum of three adults and six Scouts are needed.

Purpose: To remind folks in our Scouting for Food Designated Area that we're coming around this Saturday to collect the food bags. Our prior experience has shown this to be critical to a successful food drive. Since it's a week between bag delivery and bag pickup, most people would forget if we didn't remind them. So we try to outline the area in such a way that everyone *coming home* on Thursday and Friday night will pass at least one of our reminder signs. Troop 111 installs about 75 signs around our area.

Basic Methods: At present, we have three methods for putting up signs – the most common is using a campaign sign “U-Wire” and sliding our SFF sign over it. The second most common is stapling a sign to a telephone pole. The third, used only where there are no places to place a wire and the poles are metal or concrete, is to duct tape a poster stake to the pole, then stapling a sign to the stake.

Some Expansion Comments: (A) There are two basic types of sign locations - First, at the beginning of a “neighborhood” road, like N. 19th St. or Woodstock St.; and Second, along main roads (“arterials”) like Glebe, Quincy, Kirkwood, etc. Our “Signs-1” and “Signs-2” maps are all “neighborhood” streets, while our “Signs-3” are all arterials. The Signs-1 and Signs-2 sets can be handled by any Scout, but the Signs-3 should be handled only by Senior Scouts and adults (because they are more dangerous). (B) Signs should be placed on in such a way that oncoming traffic can read them from 20 - 40 feet away; *in other words, they should face INCOMING traffic, slightly angled to the street, and not be stapled parallel to the street.* (C) If possible, signs on “neighborhood” streets should be near the start of a street; i.e., where people have just made the turn and are still going slowly and paying attention. Corners that are opposite Stop Signs are excellent spots to place signs - people have to stop and look before proceeding. (D) It is VERY IMPORTANT to avoid placing signs in any locale where they are likely to be blocked by parked cars (if they are, they're totally useless). Always consider the area before you place the sign. If a spot further in is unlikely to be parked in, use it even though it's not at the beginning of the street. Good places are just after a fire hydrant (no one will park there!) or after a section of several driveways where no one can park on the street. If a road has parking only on one side (like Stafford St.), then install the signs on the opposite side where no one can park. If there is no other choice, staple the sign high onto a telephone pole - higher than an average car height - so it can be seen even if people park in front of it.

“How-To”: All sign installers should wear bright clothes. Drivers should use flashers at virtually all times. Gloves should be worn.

Wires: On ground, U-Wires will need to be sunk in about 6 inches. In some cases, this can be done by hand, just by pushing them in. In other cases, you will need a hammer and gently pound it in. In a few cases, the wire needs to be installed in between bricks (at the joints) in a brick array, or in a slit between concrete slabs; in such cases, the wire will only go in about two inches - but that is usually enough. However, it can take some patience to find a perfect spot where the wire can be pounded in.

The sign then just slips over the wire. If moderate wind is expected, you should put a piece of tape on the bottom of the sign once it has been installed - this will help prevent the sign from blowing away. If strong winds are expected, a regular stapler should be used to staple the bottoms shut close to the wires on both sides of the sign (can use tape for this too, if a stapler is unavailable).

Telephone Poles: On telephone poles, you will first need to find a spot that is usable (lots of poles have so many nails and staples sticking out so far that nothing can be attached without pounding them all flat first). Signs should be stapled on the poles in a zig-zag arrangement that gives them some stiffness against the wind (a single line of staples allows the sign to rock back and forth and tear itself free).

Metal and Concrete Poles: You will first need to duct-tape a poster stake to the pole; don't be ridiculous on the duct-tape - twice around is plenty! Then staple the sign to the stake; again, try to staple in a zig-zag arrangement, even though the stakes are thin.

People needed for each sign-posting Crew:

One Adult Driver

Two Scouts

Materials needed for each sign-posting Crew:

A station wagon or van, with a cleared area for signs and wires

Map binder of area

Note that the "Signs-3" binder includes specific instructions on where to place the signs.

Signs and Wires (available at Scout Hall)

Signs-1 Needs a minimum of 20 Signs and Wires

Signs-2 Needs a minimum of 23 Signs and Wires

Signs-3 Needs a minimum of 33 Signs and Wires

One good, heavy-duty staple gun

A box of staples (that fit the guns!) 3/8 to 1/2 inch pointed staples work best

A roll of duct tape

A small light-duty hammer or sledgehammer

A pair of light gloves for each Scout

A 6 - 8 foot step ladder (optional, for high placements on telephone poles)

If working at night (not recommended!): 1 - 2 flashlights; Scouts should also wear bright colored clothing which is commensurate with the weather! And should always be careful!