



Appendix III- Equipment

For 50 years SCA has been providing equipment for its high school crews. In that half-century, SCA has seen many changes in the way it manages, purchases, ships, repairs, and retires that equipment, not to mention the ways the gear itself has changed. In light of these many changes, the care and purchasing of equipment is now the full time responsibility of the SCA Equipment Manager.

The SCA Equipment Manager's goals include the following:

- all field gear provided for crews is the best available
- gear will arrive in a timely manner to work sites, at the least expense
- all gear, regardless of age, will be in good working condition
- the EM will work with CLs to efficiently and quickly repair, replace, and ship gear as needed
- the EM will make sure that CLs understand the proper use, care, and shipping of field equipment

This appendix's main focus will be on the CLs responsibilities' in regard to the gear, as well as maintenance and repair techniques that may assist the CL in the field. Throughout the CL Handbook, references have been made to gear as it relates to program management, so some of the information included in this appendix should be a refresher.

Equipment Contact

Nelson Bruni, Equipment Manager
SCA NH Equipment Warehouse
29 Salt Shed Road, Unit 2 (UPS, Fed-Ex)
P.O. Box 550 (USPS)
Charlestown, NH 03603
603-826-9983 (warehouse)

nbruni@thesca.org

Hequipment@thesca.org (for loaner equipment for members)

Pre-Program Instructions

Before your crew arrives, there are many gear related issues that you will need to take care of. Review them as you prepare for your crew and, gear-wise, your crew will be off to a good start!

Crew member needs

- As you talk to your members, make sure that they have the proper gear. If they are unable to purchase or borrow a **backpack, sleeping bag, daypack, rain gear, and/or a sleeping pad**, contact the EM immediately and the items will be reserved for that crew member. *There are a limited number of items, so get gear reserved as early as possible.* Loaner gear will be sent to the program site, not to the member's house.

Talking to Agency Contact

- When you talk to your agency contact, ask about your cache: is it accessible, has it arrived, has it disappeared (!), has the agency purchased anything. If it seems like there may be a problem, please contact the EM.
- Check with your contact about a shipping address- many times a closer and more specific address will be made available that will make shipping a missing piece of gear easier and quicker- pass this information on to the EM.

Training

- Attend (physically and mentally) the Equipment and Shipping sessions at CL training. The Session will be a pretty comprehensive briefing about all things gear and an opportunity to ask plenty of questions.
- If you want to further your knowledge of gear, gear repair, and other tricks of the trade, opt for the Advanced Gear Session during the workshops segment of training
- During orientation, a hands-on base camp will be set-up, giving everyone a chance to see, touch, and play with the gear, as well as a chance to see what's new
- For new CLs, at work skills, half of your first day will be spent attending an equipment/base camp work shop, where you will have plenty of chances to set-up and see the gear in action.

Site visit

- Once you get to your site, as early as possible, find, inventory, and inspect your cache. If anything is missing and/or broken, contact the EM and new items will be sent-out immediately
- Test out all your gear- don't take it for granted that just because something looks good that it works. The longer you wait to test your gear, the more expensive shipping costs will be and the more stressful the situation will be for you and the EM
- If it appears that the seam-tape or seams are worn out or if it has been communicated to you that your tents are leaky, please seam seal your tents
- If you do find that you will be needing something shipped, please do your best to contact the EM prior to 3pm EST; this way the EM can get your gear out the door before FedEx's 4pm deadline. This is esp. true if a weekend is approaching.
- *If your site is near the NH Warehouse or the Seattle office, you will most likely pick-up your gear straight from them. Not only will you be saving SCA \$\$\$, but you get access to lots of extra gear that is not generally sent-out. Check with the EM.*

The big message here is to be proactive- waiting till the last minute will not help out anyone, so make sure that you talk to your members, your agency, and the EM as soon as you can- it will make for a smooth beginning to your crew!

During Your Program: Equipment Maintenance

- Use the SCA gear properly and teach your participants the proper way, too. Gear should not have to be replaced because of silly mistakes or blatant misuse
- Once your tents are set-up, put all the stuff sacks and pole bags in a safe spot, so that they will not be destroyed or lost
- Keep the equipment clean. Daily maintenance and routine cleanings not only make the gear easier to clean at the end of the program, but they will also extend the quality and life of the equipment, meaning less waste.
- Make a point of checking your member tents for food wrappers, tears, and other issues every now and then. This may sound invasive, but compared to having a bear make a surprise visit...
- Keep food out of the tents! This is vital to make sure that mice, raccoons, and other critters do not rip through a tent in search of food. Also, your tents may be sent to a high density bear site, so any food odors increase the danger for that crew.
- Treat gear gently. If something doesn't fit, don't force it. Take a moment to see what the problem is and then try to fix it.
- Keep sharp objects and flames away from the tents.
- Try to set-up your base-camp in a way that protects tents from UV damage and strong winds
- Have a fairly serious talk with your members about the importance of caring for the gear and set a good example for them- if you make an effort to keep your tent mud free and clean, there's a good chance that your members will follow suit.
- Make sure that the members know to let you know about gear damage
- If you do have a gear issue, take time to investigate the problem and try to figure out if it can be easily corrected. If not, call the EM and see about getting a replacement.
- If you do need to do a field repair, consider the following:

- Do not repair an item if you are not knowledgeable in it's operation and repair, esp. when it comes to stoves
- Refer to the owner's manual/instructions
- Use the repair kits enclosed with your cache
- Try not to use duct tape to repair torn tents
- If possible, contact the EM if you have any questions

During your crew, take care of the gear as if it were your own. Remember, the gear has to get you and your crew through 30 or so days and nights, so treat it with care and respect, and it should take care of you. Gear is going to get broken, it will stop working, and accidents will happen, but by you and your crew trying hard to properly maintain and use the gear, you increase the chances of the gear not busting or failing on your crew. If and when the gear does fail, let the EM know and a new item will be sent on its way immediately.

Post Program Instructions

Once your program is over, you are expected to make sure that all of your equipment is clean, packed-up, and that it is either ready for use by another crew or ready to be picked-up for shipping. Regardless of what will be happening with your cache, make sure that it is a cache that you would be happy to see at your next site- no broken glass, no greasy dish-bins, no wet tents, no moldy cutting boards, etc.... This has been a problem in the past and SCA is trying to figure out a way to ensure that CLs are held accountable for failing to take care of the gear- we would rather not have to do this, but it continues to be a problem that needs to be solved. Any ideas are welcomed!

What follows is step by step instructions for making sure that your cache is ready for the next crew or for the next year.

Step 1: Clean Your Gear!

- Plan to spend some time at the end of your program cleaning and packing your gear away. Use your crew- it takes very little time for a crew that's been working together for 30 days to clean and pack-up a cache
- tents should be dried, cleaned (inside and out), and packed away neatly
- member tents should be inspected by a leader before they are taken down:
 - Make sure they are clean and free of trash or food
 - If food is found, please pass this info on to the EM
 - Look for damage- holes in the floor, mesh, fly and clearly mark any damage
- all kitchen gear should be cleaned, grease-free, and dried
- two-burner stoves should be free of crumbs and grease (and mice nests-it's happened!)
- MSR stoves should be aired out and cleaned of soot
- Backpacking filter cartridges should be cleaned and units dry and the hose disconnected from the unit
- Squad filters should be dry and old filters tossed
- Recycle, give-away, or trash any extra food, wrappers, boxes, foil, etc...
- Fill out the right hand side of the Inventory Sheet accurately
- If items do need to be repaired:
 - Use the brown 'toe' tags- mark your site, the item's #, and what's broken; you do not need to use repair tags on gear that is not broken
 - Use flagging or something to draw attention to a hole or broken piece
 - Be specific in your descriptions
- **In general, everything should be clean, dry, and ready to be used again**

Step 2: Preparing Your Gear

This step is probably going to be the most complex step, regardless of whether your gear stays or goes. **Refer to the back of your Inventory Sheet when you are in the field and, as always, contact the EM if you have questions or concerns.**

Another Crew at same site (same season):

- make sure that there is a complete cache in good working condition waiting for the crew
- If anything is broken or missing, it is your responsibility to let the EM and the new CLs know about it, so that it can be taken care-of in a timely manner.
- **Do not** send backpacking gear back to NH (stoves, filters, etc...)
- **Do** send back used loaner gear (backpacks, sleeping bags, pads), unless the EM advises otherwise (see the '**Shipping Instructions for All Caches**' section below)
- Make sure that the inventory envelope and its contents are left for the new CLs
- It is OK to leave the new crew extra food, supplies, fuel, etc..., just make sure that it is not junk!

Cache Stored at Site (no more crews that season)

- check with the EM, your Staff Manager, or Agency Contact to confirm that this is happening. It is likely to happen if you are at a well 'SCA-Established' site, like the Smokies, Yellowstone, Denali, etc..., or at a site where SCA is funded for many years to come
- Once you are certain that the cache will stay on site, check with your agency contact for instructions about how and where she would like to have the SCA gear stored (usually where you got it from). If you think that the Contact is unhappy with having the gear stored on-site, talk to the EM and the gear will be shipped back to SCA
- Make sure that the storage area is adequate, safe, pest-proof, and, if at all possible, lockable.
- Be sure that all the storage containers are marked with SCA and that the gear will not be mixed-in with the agency's or other organizations' gear.
- Make sure that the backpacking gear (fuel bottles can stay), first aid kits, loaner gear, SCA bear prevention gear, Dutch Ovens, etc... are in separate boxes, and ready to be shipped back to SCA
- **FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS FOUND IN THE 'Shipping Instructions' SECTION**
- All the boxes of gear that will be staying on-site should be taped-up and not be over-packed, just in case the gear needs to be shipped-out from the site.
- Place the gear in the designated SCA area, give your contact a copy of the inventory and show them where the gear is stored

Cache Being Sent To Another Site

- The EM will notify you in advance if this needs to happen
- Make sure all items being sent to the new site are dry, clean, and useable; any broken items should be trashed or sent to the EM for repair
- Clearly label where boxes are to be sent
- Loaner gear and bear containers should be sent back to the EM
- Make sure the Inventory Sheet gets sent with the cache
- Follow the '**Shipping Instructions**' Section, disregarding the notes about sending back MSR gear

Cache Being Sent Back to SCA

- Recycle, give-away, or dispose all liquids, fuels, food, foil, etc...
- Make sure that all your gear is dry and clean and that all items in need of repair are marked as such
- Follow the '**Shipping Instructions**' sections found below

Shipping Instructions For All Caches

- Remember that at the end of the season, all sites will need to send back their MSR stoves and filters, bear containers, SCA books (*Lightly On The Land*, etc.), Dutch ovens, loaner gear, repairable items, and first aid kits
- Try not to overstuff the boxes and don't over-tape - forcing gear can really do a number on tent poles, stoves, pots and pans, etc...
- Do not ship any liquid, fuel, or combustible items
- Make sure all boxes are marked SCA (use stickers provided if going back to SCA)
- Remove old tape and labels

- If wet items are being sent back to SCA, mark those boxes as such- a lot of times some 25 boxes of gear will arrive at the same time, so it's helpful to know what needs attention
- **Make sure that the right-hand section of the Inventory Sheet is filled out** and sent (and not in the box with the wet tents)
- Once everything is boxed up, find out where Fed-Ex Ground picks up (at the site) and take your stuff there. You will not need Fed-Ex labels; Fed-Ex comes with labels addressed and ready to go for SCA
- **Contact the EM and let them know the following information (if you leave a message, speak slowly and clearly):**
 - **The physical address where the items are currently**
 - **The number of boxes**
 - **The name and number of your contact, receptionist, etc.... in case Fed-Ex needs to contact someone about the pick-up**
 - **The hours of operation, so that Fed-Ex doesn't arrive to a locked office**
 - **Any special or pertinent information**
- Let your contact know when the gear is to be picked up and let them know to contact the EM if it isn't picked up in 2-3 days

As always, contact the EM if you have any questions at all and thanks in advance for taking care of the gear!