



Tubing

Council Approval: Required.

Certificate of Insurance (COI): Required from vendor providing this activity for Council Approval. Visit [GSNI's webpage](#) for information on requesting a COI from the venue. If participating in this activity as part of a trip, troops must complete the [GSNI Troop Trip Travel Request Form](#).

Activity permitted for: J C S A

Not Recommended for: Daisies and Brownies

About Tubing

Tubing involves floating down a river or other body of water in a doughnut-shaped inner tube. Tubing is popular both as a relaxing leisurely activity (in slow-moving waters) and as an adventurous recreational activity in faster-paced rivers. A fun thing to do on a tubing adventure is to create exploration games to see who can locate the most interesting nature gems, such as caves and peculiar plants or birds.

As a safety precaution, keep in mind that tubes occasionally flip, causing tubers to sometimes fall out of their tubes as they travel over rapids and through rough patches of water. Tubing can be done on lakes or rivers. As river tubing is often a one-way trip, be sure to arrange for return transportation from the tubing final destination.

If participating in boat-towed tubing, be sure to take safety precautions that comply with the [ACA Paddlesport online course](#) training and guidelines.

Learn More

- [American Whitewater](#)
- [River Tubing U.S.A.](#)
- [Whitewater Rescue Institute](#)

Include Girl Scout Members with Disabilities. Talk to Girl Scout members with disabilities and their caregivers. Ask about needs and accommodations. Always be sure to contact the location and/or the instructor in advance to ensure they are able to accommodate those with disabilities. Learn about [water safety for children with special needs](#).

Equity. Consider the history, culture, and past experiences of the Girl Scout members in your troop that could affect their ability to equally participate in an activity. Work with members and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all Girl Scout members and their families feel comfortable and have access to whatever is needed to fully participate, such as proper equipment, prior experiences, and the skills needed to enjoy the activity. See the Equity section of the [Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for general advice about expense,

Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) before starting any activity and review it so all are prepared. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury, missing person, sudden illness, or sudden weather or water emergencies.

Tubing Checkpoints

Adult Supervision. In addition to the standard adult-to-girl ratio under universal safety standards and guidelines, one adult will be the lead tuber, while another adult will be the sweep tuber. The lead adult knows firsthand the hazards and rapids on any river to be tubed. Adults should receive the [ACA Paddlesport online course](#) or [American Red Cross Water Safety for Parents and Caregivers](#)

Know the river flow. Be careful about where you roll out of a tube. If tubing in fast-moving water, the undersurface current may catch you off guard. Do not get out of a tube where the flow of water is fastest—just above the riverbed, where there is little resistance to flow. If towing behind a motorboat, the operator must be an adult driver with a valid license to operate the motorboat. There must be a spotter at the stern watching a Girl Scout while towing, always. Girl Scouts are not permitted to be towed by jet skis or wave runners.

Girl Scouts are not permitted to drive or operate motorized boats.

Verify instructor knowledge and experience. One adult must complete American Canoe Association (ACA) Paddlesports Safety Facilitator certification or Lifeguarding with Waterfront Module, have experience in teaching and/or supervising tubing activities, or have similar and equivalent documented experience according to your council's guidelines.

Confirm swimming ability. Success on the water depends on comfort and ability in the water. Conducting a swimming assessment in advance is highly recommended. See [Swimming Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for a sample or ask your instructor for guidelines. If a swimming assessment is not possible, presume all participants are non-swimmers.

Prior to tubing, participants receive verbal instruction. This should include how to float through rapids, how to breathe while swimming in rapids, and how to swim to shore. There is only one person to a tube, and tubes that are tied together are secured very snugly, with no slack between the tubes. Avoid long, dangling ropes that can get snagged on various obstructions.

Research river condition. Never go whitewater tubing on water that has not been run and rated. No tubing is taken on whitewater more difficult than Class II, as defined by the International Scale of River Difficulty or Whitewater Rapid Classification System. Be aware of possible changes in river level and its effects on the run's level of difficulty. Make sure tubing on whitewater or semi-protected waters meets the [Safety Code of American Whitewater](#).

Prepare for emergencies. Ensure the presence of a waterproof first aid kit. Troops must provide one adult certified in Adult and Pediatric CPR/First Aid/AED who is not instructing the activity, who is prepared to handle cases of near-drowning, immersion hypothermia, and sunburn. If any part of the activity is located 30 minutes or more from emergency medical services, ensure the presence of a first aider with Wilderness First Aid certification.

Safeguard valuables. Do not leave personal belongings and valuables unattended in a public place. Check with your vendor about lockers you might rent.

Get a weather report. Never go tubing on a stormy day. On the day of the activity, consult [Weather.com](#) or other reliable sources to assess weather and river conditions and water and air temperature. If weather conditions prevent the trip, be prepared with a backup plan or alternative activity.

Be prepared in the event of a storm with lightning. Exit water immediately and take shelter away from tall objects (including trees, buildings, and electrical poles). Find the lowest point in an open flat area. Squat low to the ground on the balls of the feet, and place hands on knees with head between them. During storms, if shore cannot be reached, keep a sharp lookout for boats and other obstructions.

Safety Gear

- U.S. Coast Guard–approved life jacket (Type III recommended) that fits according to weight and height specifications. Inspect life jackets to ensure that they are in good condition and contain no tears.
- Closed-toe sport sandals with heel strap, water socks, or shoes (no flip-flops).
- At least one graspable and throwable Coast Guard–approved personal flotation device (Type IV buoyant cushion or ring buoy or equivalent) immediately available for each group on the water.
- Waterproof sunscreen and lip balm with SPF.