

Cooking and Sustainability Merit Badges Added to Eagle-Required List



Effective Jan. 1, 2014, the Cooking merit badge will be required in order to obtain the Eagle Scout rank. Regardless of when a Scout earned the Life rank or began working on Eagle, unless he fulfills all the requirements—with the exception of his board of review—before Jan. 1, 2014, he must earn the Cooking merit badge to become an Eagle Scout.

During 2013, the Cooking merit badge will undergo a major revision. The changes to Cooking will first appear in a revised merit badge pamphlet that will be released during 2013. The new requirements then become effective Jan. 1, 2014, with the release of Boy Scout Requirements, No. 34765. (The process for implementing changes to merit badges is covered in the Guide to Advancement, topic 7.0.4.2, “What to Do When Requirements Change.”)

Scouts completing the requirements for the Eagle Scout rank after Jan. 1, 2014, must earn the Cooking merit badge under either the existing requirements or under the requirements as revised during 2013. Scouts are not required to earn the badge under the new requirements in order to qualify for Eagle.

Upon its release during the summer of 2013, the Sustainability merit badge will become available as an option with Environmental Science as an Eagle-required merit badge. At that time, Scouts may choose to earn Sustainability in place of the currently required Environmental Science. Scouts who have already earned Environmental Science may also earn Sustainability, but only one of the two merit badges would count as “Eagle-required.” The other, however, may count as one of the others necessary to reach the total of 21 required merit badges.

The Sustainability merit badge, in essence, takes conservation and environmental science to another level. The protection, preservation, and management of wildlife and natural resources involved in conservation provide a foundation for what we call environmental science. The latter integrates physical and biological sciences such as ecology, biology, soil science, atmospheric science, and others in order to generate solutions to environmental issues. Sustainability takes off from there by taking responsibility for balancing long-term environmental, social, health, and economic needs with progress and development. It further suggests that development, while meeting the needs of the present, cannot compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs.