



Rocket with Scouting

Preparing for a Successful District Launch Day



Getting Organized

- Recruit a district rocket launch coordinator who will work with the district membership committee to ensure the district rocket launch is a success.
- Secure location, date, and time for rocket launch, which can be part of an existing district event such as a Bobcat Day, Tiger Day, or other Cub Scout activity.
- Visit proposed location site to ensure that the rocket launch will be permitted. Review the site requirements listed below and in NAR Model Rocket Safety Code to ensure all safety guidelines are followed.
- Generate excitement among Cub Scout packs at roundtables, district activities and trainings, web sites, and email blasts.
- Encourage every pack to remind their new Cub Scouts to participate and to register their participation online at www.shac.org/rockets to ensure that all district launch sites are well prepared.

Rocket & Equipment Distribution

- Fall recruiting turn-in nights are scheduled on every Thursday night in September for each district. Rocket distribution will take place at these times.
 - Pack representatives will receive one model rocket per paid/completed registration form turned in by September 30.
 - Qualifying applications include boys who join in August or September – plus kindergarteners who joined in May to attend day camp as Tiger Cubs.
 - Consider printing stickers to place on rocket boxes upon distribution that state date/time/location of your district's rocket launch plus the web site for alternative dates (www.shac.org/rockets).
- Rocket engines (type B) will be distributed separately to district executives, who will deliver engines to the event.
- At the district Fall Recruiting Training, each pack will receive one model rocket to use for promotional purposes.
- Council launchers will be available for checkout by district executives (2 per district) on a first-come, first-served basis. Districts are encouraged to work with local hobbyists to arrange for use of their launchers.
- If packs or individuals wish to purchase additional rockets, they should contact Brad McClain (brad@paulssupplies.com) or Marcus Jackson (marcus.jackson@scouting.org) at the council office Scout Shop for special Sam Houston Area Council pricing.

Rocket Preparation

- The SHAC incentive rocket is a sturdy snap-together model that requires no additional materials for assembly.
- For retrieval purposes, each boy should have name on his rocket. Boys may decorate their rockets with stickers or markers, but no additional weight should be added.

Launch Event

- The event chair and staff must be familiar with and agree to adhere to the National Association of Rocketry (NAR) Safety Code, found at www.nar.org/safety-information/model-rocket-safety-code. Highlights include:
 - Launch safety – countdowns, 15-foot safety circle
 - Launchers – End of launch rod must be above eye level.
 - Launch site – 200-foot open area required for a type B engine; monitor wind and dry grass conditions
 - Recovery safety – Do not attempt recovery from power lines, tall trees, etc.
- Recruit sufficient staff for rocket inspection, engine prep, launching, and recovery. (See tips on next page.)
- Boys may attend any launch event in the council. Pre-registration is anticipated to take place through Doubleknot.
- To alleviate a long wait-time for boys, consider staggering the recommended arrival times by last name or pack number.
- If boys bring their own rocket, they must provide their own engine.
- In case of inclement weather, launch should be rescheduled for a later date.

Tips for a Great Rocket Launch – from an Experienced Rocketeer



General Tips

- Do not build your rockets at the launch site. These should always be built prior to the launch day.
- Adults should always closely supervise ALL rocketry building, launching, and recovery activities.

Choosing a Launch Site

- When discussing launch site with landowners, make sure they understand that rockets are NOT considered fireworks (per the National Fire Prevention Association).
- The area should be free of tall trees, power lines, active roadways or towers that could inhibit rocket recovery.
- For B class rocket engines, a 200-foot area is needed for safe recovery. Larger motors require additional space.
- Make sure you have copies of landowner permission on hand during launch.

Setting Up Your Launch Site

- Conduct a test launch to determine winds and the best location to set up launch pad/site.
- Safety circle. Launch team should be a minimum of 15 feet from the pads. General crowds should be at least 30 feet away. Consider the best way to mark off this perimeter.
- You may need to angle the launch pad to avoid rockets leaving the recovery area (never more than 30-degrees of vertical per NAR Model Rocket Safety Code).
- Fire Safety. Ensure there are sufficient fire extinguishers and people prepared to use them. Fires can be ignited at the launch AND THE RECOVERY SITE.
- First Aid kits should always be easily accessible.

Rocket Launch

- Watch this video for a very good briefing on prepping rockets prior to launch:
<https://youtu.be/hC6evC1N05c>
- Only adults are allowed to handle or load rocket motors.
- Every rocket should be safety inspected prior to launch.
- If a rocket misfires or does not launch, be sure to wait a minimum of 30 seconds before approaching it.
- Lightning, winds, or any adverse weather should immediately stop the launch.
- Be alert for heat exhaustion.

Logistics

- Estimate that you should have the following levels of staffing/resources per 20 rocketeers:
 - 1 launch pad and launch controller
 - 1 adult rocketeer performing safety inspections and prepping (parachute, recovery wadding, ignition wires, plugs)
 - 1 adult rocketeer supervising launch operations
 - 1 adult rocketeer supervising rocket recovery
- Using the above team set-up, you should be able to launch 15-20 rockets per hour, per pad.
- Rocket launch-time windows (for staggering participants) should not exceed 2 hours.
- Safety inspection and prepping/motor installation should be done away from launch/recovery areas.