



For more information contact:
Nancy J. Sullivan, MAJ
Office of Communications
Telephone: (304) 558-7899
Email: nancy.j.sullivan@wv.gov

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Jamboree preparations will include DHHR presence

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources is preparing for the 2013 Boy Scouts of America's National Jamboree July 15-24 at the Summit Bechtel Family Scout Reserve in Fayette and Raleigh counties to ensure public health safety.

"As part of our ongoing preparedness efforts, the DHHR Bureau for Public Health has been working closely with the Boy Scouts of America and local health departments preparing for the event," said state health officer and commissioner for public health Dr. Marian Swinker. "The 2013 National Scout Jamboree is the single largest mass gathering event in the history of West Virginia and it is our responsibility in public health to help ensure that attendees are safe from preventable illness, injuries and disease, just as we do every day across the state."

The Jamboree is expected to draw as many as 40,000 boy scouts, staff and volunteers, in addition to 200,000-300,000 visitors to southern West Virginia. "When you consider the size of this event, the Bureau for Public Health is basically assisting the Boy Scouts of America by providing guidance on water and food safety issues, illness and injury prevention and consultation on other issues that could surface in public health," said Dr. Swinker. The Bureau for Public Health will have a presence both on and off site. "A five member team will be stationed on-site. This team will track and monitor reports of illness, injury or disease and stands ready to assist with outbreak detection and control or consultation if needed."

The Summit Bechtel Family Scout Reserve will serve as the permanent home for the National Scout Jamboree every four years and it will host the World Scout Jamboree in 2019.

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