GSLC Unit Climbing and Rappelling Policy

The Great Salt Lake Council Unit Climbing and Rappelling Policy Standards meet or exceed the National B.S.A. Policies in effect as of March 1, 2010. The following policies are mandatory for the conduct of all unit climbing and/or rappelling programs or events conducted at off-council properties.

Participants shall be in compliance with the applicable Great Salt Lake Council Policy, National Standards, the BSA *Climb On Safely* and *Topping Out* publications. In the case of conflict between the listed applicable publications, the more conservative rule shall apply.

All participants must complete parts A, B, and C of the Annual Health and Medical Record (680-001, Rev.11/2010). All participants must complete the Parental Informed Consent Agreement for Climbing/Rappelling Activities form. Both the Annual Health and Medical Record and the Parental Informed Consent Agreement for Climbing/Rappelling Activities forms must be turned into and reviewed by the designated personnel and leaders supervising the activity.

During unit activities, the director and/or lead instructor in charge must be trained for that activity in a BSA or approved instructor training program. The instructors must brief everyone as to what is to be accomplished and review proper voice commands before entering the climbing activity area. Persons with serious medical problems should have approval from a physician to participate and provide that information to the lead instructor. An emergency communication plan must be in place for every activity.

Rappelling and climbing require supervision by at least two qualified directors or instructors. Only one participant is permitted to climb or rappel on a route at a time, and each participant must be observed throughout the entire event by at least one trained leader. Activities in the rock area will not be conducted when the surface is wet.

Horseplay should never be encouraged, permitted, or tolerated while the program is being conducted. No speedy or bounding descent that places a strain on the anchors, the rope, and/or the belayer will be used, nor will Australian, or assault face-first rappelling be taught or used. A rappeller will not jump from the top edge in an assault or emergency type of rappel.

The belay line used for a climber on a natural surface must be attached with a figure eight follow-through, either directly through the front of the harness or as recommended by the harness manufacturer.

Every person must wear a UIAA, CEN, or ASTM approved rock-climbing helmet with the chin strap secured when rappelling, climbing, belaying, or when within the designated safety area. Instructors must inspect and approve all personal equipment used in the designated safety area.

The following must be followed by, but not limited to, all unit climbing and rappelling activities.

1. Units must file and obtain an approved Council Tour Plan that clearly states what the activity is prior to the activity.
2. All participants must fill out the Annual Health and Medical and Parental Informed Consent Agreement for Climbing/Rappelling Activities forms.
3. Units must have minimum of two qualified climbing directors or instructors. (One climbing director or lead climbing instructor **and** one other climbing director, lead climbing instructor or climbing instructor)
4. The ratio of instructors to participants (scouts, scoutmasters etc) is 1:6 with a minimum of two instructors (see #3 above).
5. All Lead Climbing Instructor and Climbing Instructor certifications (BSA or approved training) are valid for 2 years ending on December 31 of the expiring year. If training is obtained outside of BSA, proof of continued education and certification must be provided every two years.
6. One person on site must have a minimum of CPR and basic first aid certification. If emergency evacuation is more then 30 minutes by ground, it is recommended that an instructor or unit leader be trained to a minimum level of wilderness first aid (16 hours) and be present during the activity.
7. All participants must wear UIAA, CEN or ASTM approved rock-climbing helmet with chinstrap.
8. All belayers and rappellers must wear gloves.
9. All climbing ropes must have a minimum diameter of 10.5 mm and must be UIAA or CEN approved.
10. All static ropes used for rappelling must have a tensile strength (breaking strength) of at least 22.2 kiloNewtons (5,000 pounds) when new and must be UIAA or CEN approved.
11. Records must be kept on all equipment (ropes, helmets, webbing and cordage, harnesses and hardware etc.) used according to the guidelines in *Topping Out* and the BSA National Standards.
12. All equipment (ropes, helmets, webbing and cordage, harnesses and hardware etc.) must be retired according to the guidelines in *Topping Out* and the BSA National Standards.
13. Where possible, releasable anchors should be used for rappelling (e.g. munter mule or contingency eight).