



## New Welding Merit Badge Talking Points

- The Boy Scouts of America collaborated with the American Welding Society (AWS), BSA Health and Safety Committee, and OSHA members to create the Welding merit badge.
- Scouts can begin working on this merit badge at the end of February, when the pamphlet is available online and in Scout shops. The official earn date is 2/24/12. Check Scout Wire for more communication and video footage.

### Why a Welding Merit Badge?

- A BSA youth interest survey showed significant interest in adding a Welding merit badge to the more than 120 merit badges currently in the series.
- This merit badge is a good fit with preparing Scouts for their future and offers Scouts a fun way to explore skills that can grow into a hobby or career.
- The Welding merit badge will enable Scouts to learn hands-on how to join metals using welding techniques. The skills they learn may even be helpful for making or repairing items for their troop.

### The Importance Today

- Welding is an important part of our nation's growth and stability; employers have a consistent need for skilled welders in construction, manufacturing, and other industries.
- Many believe that a large part of the U.S. economy is dependent on welding; and continued advances will help drive our nation's productivity and strengthen its financial stability.

### Industry

- Manufacturing is experiencing a shortage of skilled welders; the average age of welders in the United States is about 55. By the end of the decade, it is estimated there will be a critical need for 200,000 new welders.
- Skilled and talented welders have a brand-new place in our contemporary world. The image of last century's industrial age lingers: the stereotypical welder toiling away in the factory. But that era has passed. Welding has a new spark. Advancements in science, technology, and the digital universe have transformed the world—and the world of welding. Now even robots are being utilized for welding in manufacturing.
- New innovations in welding featured at the 2011 FABTECH Expo included more than 75 products and innovations that are considered "green" technologies. This fits with the Conservation Good Turn and other green initiatives of Scouting and Venturing.

### How to Find Counselors

- The people who know the most about welding can also serve as merit badge counselors for Scouts back in their home communities. To help meet this need, the AWS is helping recruit merit badge counselors by referring them to BSA local councils via the online council locator.  
<http://www.scouting.org/localcouncillocator.aspx>
- The Welding merit badge was highlighted at the 2011 FABTECH show in November in Chicago because this is North America's largest metal forming, fabricating, finishing, and welding event. See <http://www.fabtechexpo.com/> and the AWS site <http://www.aws.org/w/a/weldingbadge/index.html> for more.

### Fun Quotes

- Astronaut and Scout, Buzz Aldrin credits welders for helping him be one of the first men to walk on the moon.
- Renowned military pilot, Chuck Yeager explained that welding helped him break the sound barrier.
- Think about the things in our lives—bikes, cars, chairs, desks, buildings, etc. More than likely, they have all been touched by welding.