

# Sustainability Merit Badge Pre-Work

Sustainability is a 4-hour class. At least 1 hour of this badge will be held outside; please dress accordingly.

Scouts should bring a snack and plenty of water. Please, no red liquids.

What to bring:

- Blue card, pen, and pencil
- Appropriate clothing, including close-toed shoes
- Snack and water
- Pre-work

Pre-work:

1. **(1.)** Before starting work on any other requirements for this merit badge, write in your own words the meaning of sustainability. Explain how you think conservation and stewardship of our natural resources relate to sustainability. Have a family meeting and ask family members to write down what they think sustainability means. Be sure to take notes. You will need this information again for requirement 5. **Be prepared to share with your counselor what you think sustainability means.**
2. **(2. Water A.)** Develop and implement a plan that attempts to reduce your family's water usage. Examine your family's water bills reflecting usage for three months (past or current). As a family, choose three ways to help reduce consumption. Implement those ideas for one month. Share what you learn with your counselor and tell how your plan affected your family's water usage. **Bring copies of the water bills you examined, and a written list of how your family reduced your water usage.**
3. **(2. Food A.)** Develop and implement a plan that attempts to reduce your household food waste. Establish a baseline and then track and record your results for two weeks. Report your results to your family and counselor. **Bring in a copy of your baseline food consumption and disposal, as well as your two-week food tracking. The food baseline can be grocery receipts, an excel spreadsheet, or any other means you document your food consumption with.**
4. **(2. Energy B.)** Develop and implement a plan that attempts to reduce consumption for one of your family's household utilities. Examine your family's bills for that utility reflecting usage for three months (past or current). As a family, choose three ways to help reduce consumption and be a better steward of this resource. Implement those ideas for

one month. Share what you learn with your counselor and tell how your plan affected your family's usage. **Bring a copy of your utility bills and your chosen ways to reduce consumption of this utility.**

**OR**

**(2. Energy C.)** Evaluate your family's fuel and transportation usage. Review your family's transportation-related bills (gasoline, diesel, electric, public transportation, etc.) reflecting usage for three months (past or current). As a family, choose three ways to help reduce consumption and be a better steward of this resource. Implement those ideas for one month. Share what you learn with your counselor, and tell how your plan affected your family's transportation habits. **Bring in a copy of your transportation bills or receipts, and your chosen ways to reduce these costs.**

5. **(2. Stuff A.)** Keep a log of the "stuff" your family purchases (excluding food items) for two weeks. In your log, categorize each purchase as an essential need (such as soap) or a desirable want (such as a DVD). **Bring in a copy of your "stuff" log, with "wants" and "needs" labelled, for your counselor to review.**
  
6. **(6.)** Learn about career opportunities in the sustainability field. Pick one and find out the education, training, and experience required. Discuss what you have learned with your counselor and explain why this career might interest you. **Bring in copy of your research about this career for your counselor to review.**

After the Badge:

**(5.a)** After completing this badge, **have a family meeting.** Discuss what your family has learned about what it means to be a sustainable citizen. Talk about the behavioral changes and life choices your family can make to live more sustainably.

This requirement will be signed off during the badge with the intent that Scout and their families have a family meeting at some point afterwards to discuss how their thoughts and behaviors about being sustainable may have changed or evolved, or how their lives were affected by attempting to be more sustainable.

**If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact Lassine Doumbia at [Lassine.doumbia@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Lassine.doumbia@fairfaxcounty.gov), or call (703) 941-1065.**