



Cranberry Harbor Roundtable

May 2020 Safety Moment: Being Observant

Especially today with our state affairs related to the public health crisis, I can safely say there is too much noise and distraction around us. At home, “at work,” and with our scouting caps on, we all have a lot on our minds. Often there are a “few other things” going on around us too. Both our scouts and we can often miss a lot of critical information. An important skill for all of us involves us slowing down and become more situational aware of our surroundings. This will allow us to be more cognizant of the environment around us and to perform at our best.

Be Observant

How many times have you tripped over a rock or a root on a hike, or have been startled by someone who was suddenly “in your space” that you were not aware of? It does happen. Depending on what is preoccupying our minds: our emotions, the ambient noise levels, or other distractions around us will affect our ability to be observant. The less observant we are, the higher our chances we are to be injured by an unrecognized hazard.

Be More Observant

Eliminate distractions: Whether it is someone talking to you, excessive noise, or for that matter anything that could distract you from your given task, eliminate it. Consider good housekeeping practices as a tool to eliminate unnecessary distractions around your “work space.”

Monitor your thoughts: Is your head in the game? Can you think of a time when you were driving and can barely remember a part of the trip? How observant do you think you were while operating your vehicle?

Take a moment: Stop and look around you before starting any given task. Ensure you have a grasp on your situational awareness. What are the known hazards? Do you have everything you need to start available to you? *Are you prepared...* to begin and deal with any contingencies?

Quick Exercises

I suggest you and your scouts get out a regular number two pencil and look at it. (If you don’t have a pencil around, grab any basic household item.) Begin to name off as many observations as you can to describe the pencil or object. If you cannot list more than a dozen descriptors, you should strive to be more observant.

OR while in the car, ask yourself: “Where am I?” Ask yourself: If I had to report a car rollover that just occurred in front of me, “What town am I in, what road am I on, am I traveling northbound or southbound, what’s the closest exit, are there any injuries?” Simple exercises like these should provide some insight of how many small details there are, what our level of situational awareness is, and how often we glaze over things as we go throughout our day.

Be MORE Prepared and Be SAFE!