

Fly Safe Campaign



MAINTAIN ACCIDENT AWARENESS

Don't become a statistic!

NTSB has reported 15 ag accidents including 5 fatal accidents so far this year.

WATCH YOUR WEIGHT AND THE WEATHER FOR A SAFE TAKEOFF THIS SUMMER

Almost every year several ag aircraft crash during takeoff. From 2011 to 2020 there have been an average of six takeoff accidents every season. A potential cause for some of these accidents is an aircraft overweight for the weather conditions at takeoff. Filling the hopper to its maximum capacity reduces your margin for error and can result in a failed takeoff if you do not account for changes that occur during the day such as temperature and wind direction. Temperature can be especially dangerous during the hot summer months when aerial applications are at their peak.

As temperature increases it increases the density altitude, which means the aircraft will perform like it is at a higher altitude. This occurs because higher temperatures decrease the density of the air, similar to what happens as altitude increases. Less dense air results in less lift generated by the wings and reduced propeller efficiency, both of which will increase the distance needed to safely takeoff. Know how to calculate density altitude and make sure you track it throughout the course of the day as temperature increases. Plan your work to get as much done as possible during the cooler part of the day, and plan on taking smaller loads during the hottest part of the day to reduce your risk. It might take longer but will still require less time than an accident.

When working on unfamiliar airstrips start with smaller loads until you are comfortable and be even more mindful of changing temperature and wind directions throughout the day. Knowing the wind direction is always important but a tailwind can be especially dangerous on takeoff. A light crosswind can subtly change direction and become a tailwind. A heavily loaded aircraft, with high temperature and a tailwind can mean your next takeoff won't end the same as your earlier ones that day. Don't let density altitude take years off your life.

Check Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs)

Always check TFR NOTAMs before flying! Make sure you have proof of a preflight TFR briefing from sources such as FSS or <https://www.1800wxbrief.com>.

Make a "Fly Safe" Resolution Now!

Watch your fax or e-mail every other Monday in April, May, June and August and every Monday in July for scheduled issues. Supplemental messages may be sent when increased flight activity warrants additional safety awareness. To be removed from the "Fly Safe" fax list, please call 202-546-5722 or e-mail information@agaviation.org. Let us know if you wish to be removed only from these Fly Safe messages or all faxes or e-mails from the NAAA.