

Fly Safe Campaign



MAINTAIN ACCIDENT AWARENESS

Don't become a statistic!

NTSB reports 32 ag accidents, including 8 fatal accidents, for 2024. An additional 3 fatalities are unreported, making 11 fatal accidents.

STAY ALERT – CONSTANTLY SCAN FOR OBSTACLES, BIRDS, AND OTHER AIRCRAFT

Ag pilots must be constantly vigilant for all ground and aerial threats. There have been three mid-air collisions this season. While technology such as ADS-B and radios can dramatically reduce the risk of mid-air collisions, they are not a replacement for keeping your eyes out of the cockpit and continuously scanning for threats. Changing backgrounds, lighting conditions, your position relative to an obstacle, and distance from a threat all impact your ability to see it. This is why it's critical to keep scanning even after your initial reconnaissance is completed. If you're flying fast and turning as hard as possible, all your concentration will be on the turn, leaving no time to scan the field before reentry.

Birds represent a danger to ag aircraft. There was an accident earlier this season that was the result of a bird strike. A turbine-powered airplane struck several ducks while conducting an aerial application. After the collision there was a total loss of engine power and the airplane crashed, coming to rest inverted with substantial damage. Fortunately, the pilot only sustained minor injuries. Be aware of the presence of birds, paying particular attention to flooded areas with waterfowl. Birds can be unpredictable in how they react to an oncoming aircraft, so don't assume you know what direction they will fly if you disturb them.

When you're spraying in a new territory or spraying a new field within your normal working area, use extra caution when scouting for threats. Even when working familiar fields, you can't allow complacency to creep into your flying. You need to keep your head on a swivel, constantly looking for objects so as to avoid collision. Remember that overload blindness can easily impact ag aviators because of the numerous things that require attention. Do not let any single task consume your attention to the point you forget to keep scanning for threats.

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 e-mail every other Monday in April and May and every Monday in June, July, and August for scheduled issues. Supplemental messages may be sent when additional safety awareness is warranted. Please call 202-546-5722 or e-mail information@agaviation.org if you wish to be removed only from these Fly Safe messages or all e-mails from the NAAA.