



Be Careful When Flying Unmanned Aircraft Systems and Drones

September 1, 2015 - There have been several recent reports of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) or Drones flying in the vicinity of commercial airplane flights approaching major US airports. These drones are most likely being flown by recreational users who are unaware of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations regarding the use of drones near urban airports. The recreational use of drones has seen a dramatic increase in recent years. It is estimated that over 700,000 UAS will be purchased in the United States this year alone; a 63% increase over last year.

The FAA has issued rules concerning the recreational flying of drones near major airports. These rules require notification to the airport control tower about the UAS /drone flight when they are going to occur within 5 miles of the airport boundary. It is important to note that all of the land within the City of Norwalk is within 5 miles of the Des Moines International Airport.

We encourage all recreational flyers to familiarize themselves with the rules regarding the use of their unmanned aircraft systems so that any possible conflict with the commercial airlines that regularly fly over Norwalk can be minimized.

Have fun and be safe.

Safety guidelines for recreational users of Drones or Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)

- Contact the airport or control tower before flying within five miles of an airport.
- Remain well clear of and do not interfere with manned aircraft operations, and you must see and avoid other aircraft and obstacles at all times.
- Fly no higher than 400 feet and remain below any surrounding obstacles when possible.
- Keep your drone in eyesight at all times, and use an observer to assist if needed.
- Remain well clear of and do not interfere with manned aircraft operations, and you must see and avoid other aircraft and obstacles at all times.
- Do not intentionally fly over unprotected persons or moving vehicles, and remain at least 25 feet away from individuals and vulnerable property.
- Do not fly in adverse weather conditions such as in high winds or reduced visibility.
- Do not fly near or over sensitive infrastructure or property such as power stations, water treatment facilities, correctional facilities, heavily traveled roadways, government facilities, etc.