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Alaska's Know-Before-You-Fly Drone Safety Guidelines

FAA allows the operation of model aircraft, also known as small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS) or drones, for recreational purposes under the Special Rule for Model Aircraft. Recreational UAS must be operated in accordance with a community-based safety program and the FAA's guidance in [Advisory Circular 91-57](#).

What is recreational use of a sUAS (Drones)?

Recreational use is the operation of a sUAS for personal interests and enjoyment, and not for compensation or hire. For example, using a sUAS to take photographs for your own personal use would be considered recreational; using the same device to take photographs or videos for compensation or sale to another individual would be considered commercial. You should check with the [FAA](#) for further determination as to what constitutes commercial sUAS operation.

SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR RECREATIONAL USERS OF sUAS (DRONES)

- Users should follow community-based safety guidelines, as developed by organizations such as the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA)
- Users should fly no higher than 400 feet and remain below surrounding obstacles when possible
- Users must be able to see their sUAS at all times, and use an observer to assist them if needed
- Users should remain well clear and must not interfere with manned aircraft operations, must see and avoid other aircraft and obstacles at all times, must avoid any activity that would cause a manned aircraft pilot to divert from planned operations, and must give way to all other aircraft at all times.
- Users must not intentionally fly over unprotected persons or moving vehicles, and should remain at least 25 feet away from individuals and vulnerable property
- Users must contact the airport or control tower before flying within five miles of an airport
- Users should be aware that in addition to public airports, Alaska has many private airstrips as well as bodies of waters used for take-off and landing by float planes and should not fly a UAS in the vicinity of these locations
- Users should not fly a UAS weighing more than 55 lbs unless it's certified by an aeromodelling community-based organization.
- Users should not fly in adverse weather conditions such as in high winds or reduced visibility
- Users must not fly under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Users should ensure the operating environment is safe and that the operator is competent and proficient in the operation of the sUAS
- Users should not operate on or fly over private property without first obtaining permission from the property owner and/or tenant
- Users should not fly near or over sensitive infrastructure or property such as power stations, water treatment facilities, correctional facilities, heavily traveled roadways, government facilities, etc.
- Users should not conduct surveillance or photograph persons in areas where there is an expectation of privacy without the individual's permission (See AMA's [privacy policy](#))

Additional safety resources:

[AMA National Model Aircraft Safety Code](#)

[FAA What Can I Do With My Model Aircraft?](#)



This hand-out is a public education resource provided by Alaska's Unmanned Aircraft Systems Legislative Task Force (UASLTF) to raise awareness by providing a brief summary of the laws applicable to sUAS. For more information, contact 907-376-3725 or Rep.Shelley.Hughes@akleg.gov. The UASLTF would like to thank Academy of Model Aeronautics and the Association of Unmanned Vehicle Systems for their joint campaign to promote safe operations of UAS and for providing the safety guidelines listed above. All sUAS operators are responsible for reviewing and complying with applicable state and federal laws that may apply to flying sUAS. While this hand-out provides a summary of the laws applicable to sUAS, users of sUAS should not rely on this hand-out for a full understanding of applicable laws and are responsible for independently reviewing federal and state law before flying sUAS.