

## **Fly Safe Campaign**



### **MAINTAIN ACCIDENT AWARENESS**

***Don't become a statistic!***

**NTSB has reported 38 ag accidents including 10 fatal accidents so far this year. There has been 1 fatal accident not yet reported by NTSB bringing the unofficial total to 11 fatal accidents.**

### **WIRES END SEVEN LIVES IN 2021**

There have been 7 accidents involving wire strikes in 2021. All 7 of those wire strike accidents have been fatal, representing 64% of the 11 fatal accidents. Those 7 fatal wire strikes account for 18% of the total accidents in 2021. From 2011 to 2020, wire strikes accounted for 14% of the total accidents and 16% of the fatal accidents. In that ten-year period, the highest percentage of fatal accidents caused by wire strikes for a single year was 50%--that was 2019.

The time of day you make an application has an impact on how well you can see wires and other obstructions. If possible, avoid spraying fields when the sun is on the horizon during the early morning and late afternoon. Flying passes during these conditions makes it more difficult to see wires and other obstructions. If you need to make applications early in the morning or late afternoon, try to select fields where you will be making passes to the north and south so you can avoid flying directly into the sun. Save your fields where you will be flying east and west for the middle part of the day when the sun is higher and less likely to reduce your ability to see obstructions. If you need to spray a field where you would normally make east-west passes when the sun is low, consider flying the passes north and south even if it will take longer. When you are making your clean up passes, do them with the sun behind you so that obstacles will stand out better.

Another thing that stands out in the 2021 accidents is the number of helicopter accidents. The 2019 industry survey indicates that helicopters represent 16% of the ag aircraft fleet in the U.S. At this point in 2021, helicopters were involved in 28% of the total accidents and 36%, or 4, of the fatal accidents. While the NTSB is still investigating all the fatal accidents, it appears at this time that the pilots in 3 out of the 4 fatal helicopter accidents had minimal experience in the ag aviation industry. All 4 of the fatal helicopter accidents involved wire strikes. The busy season and shortage of pilots likely contributed to many pilots with little ag experience being brought in to make applications. It is important that if you are new to flying ag you seek out good mentorship to help you learn to fly safe.

### **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](mailto: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.