

Fly Safe Campaign



MAINTAIN ACCIDENT AWARENESS

Don't become a statistic!

NTSB has reported 7 ag accidents including 1 fatal accident so far this year.

HIGH NUMBER OF HELICOPTER ACCIDENTS IN 2022, DON'T GET INTO A TIGHT SPOT IN ANY AIRCRAFT!

Of the seven ag accidents reported by the NTSB for 2022, six involve helicopters. The single fatal accident for 2022 was a helicopter. That's 86% of the total ag accidents and 100% of the fatal ag accidents. The 2019 NAAA survey shows helicopters make up 16% of the ag fleet in the U.S. while the 2020 FAA GA survey shows helicopters are 22% of the fleet. No matter what type of aircraft you fly, please heed this and all other Fly Safes as we must always re-commit ourselves to safety.

All the NTSB reports on these accidents are preliminary with very few details and which could change. Two appear to be from hard landings, one involving autorotation. Two are completely unknown at this point; one of those was fatal. One was loss of control in a turn, and another a power line strike. In 2021 there were 22 total helicopter accidents (39% of the total ag accidents) and 4 fatal helicopter accidents (33% of fatal ag accidents). Of the 22 helicopter accidents, 10 were wire strikes. All four of the fatal helicopter accidents were wire strikes. No matter what you're flying, thoroughly scout your fields for wires and other obstructions and don't forget about them once you start your application. While the performance of a helicopter may tempt you to get close to obstacles to treat every part of a customer's field, do not let this temptation lead you into an accident. Maintain a safe distance from all obstacles.

Helicopters require additional routine maintenance – do not put repairs off no matter how busy you are. Proper mentoring is also critical for safety. If you're a helicopter pilot new to the aerial application industry, make sure you find an operator who will mentor you properly and bring you safely into the industry. Start with light loads on open, easy fields and gradually increase the difficulty of working around obstructions. Helicopter pilots must maintain a safe speed in a turn and not do pedal turns. Ag helicopter pilots must also understand the "height velocity curve" to survive an engine failure. There is little to no ferry time and helicopters need to be flown every second, so fatigue can be an issue. Make sure someone is monitoring how tired you are and try to stay well rested, hydrated, and nourished.

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 and May and every Monday in June, July and August for scheduled issues. Supplemental messages may be sent when additional safety awareness is warranted. 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.