

Fly Safe Campaign



MAINTAIN ACCIDENT AWARENESS

Don't become a statistic!

NTSB has reported 18 ag accidents including 5 fatal accidents so far this year. There have been 2 fatal accidents not yet reported by NTSB bringing the total to 7 fatal accidents.

SPRAY MIXTURE FOAMING FROM HOPPER CAUSES ANOTHER ACCIDENT SIMILAR TO 2020 FATALITY

A spray mixture of foliar fertilizer and glyphosate that foamed out of a hopper in flight, resulting in obstructed visibility, has caused another accident. While the pilot survived this recent foaming caused accident, in 2020 the pilot who experienced this foaming subsequently crashed in [a fatal accident](#). The mixture in both accidents contained a foliar nitrogen fertilizer and glyphosate. The [2020 NTSB report](#) has more details.

In regard to the recent accident, the ground crew had some trouble mixing the two but when they added a compatibility agent and defoamer it seemed to be alright. There were no issues on the 40-mile ferry to the field, likely because the pilot was not running the pump so there was no agitation. When the pilot turned the pump on to begin spraying the field, the agitation began, and the mixture started to foam up and eventually escaped the hopper. The foam ultimately caused the pilot to lose visibility. He opened a door in an attempt to see but shortly thereafter he impacted the ground, destroying the aircraft. This recent accident and a [jar-test demonstration](#) of what happens with this mixture done after the 2020 accident strongly suggest that the [foaming reaction](#) does not occur until the solution is agitated, and when it does the expansion of the mixture is dramatic. When you conduct a jar test to determine compatibility, it is essential you agitate the test mixture to verify whether or not foaming will occur.

The operation uses a different brand of foliar fertilizer for their aerial applications. The only reason they were applying the brand that caused the foaming was because a farmer dropped it off. He had been unable to get it out using his ground rig and therefore wanted the operation to put it out with an airplane. He dropped the fertilizer off in a trailer with no accompanying label. A post-accident review of the SDS revealed a caution statement for mixing the fertilizer with glyphosate as well as some other chemicals. Never accept an opened product from a customer or a product without a label. Use caution with new products.

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. Let us know if you wish to be removed only from these Fly Safe messages or all faxes or e-mails from the NAAA.