



Title: DRONE USAGE POLICY FOR FPCC EMPLOYEES	
Subject: GENERAL OPERATIONS	Page: 1 of 4
Category: DISTRICTWIDE POLICY	Approval Date: 07/08/2016
	Policy Number: 03.30.00
	Last Revised Date: 06/13/2018

POLICY STATEMENT:

An Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV or “Drone”) is an aircraft without a human pilot aboard. Drones are controlled remotely. The operation of unmanned domestic aircraft systems including Drones is regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”) and relevant state and local laws. In general, the purpose of Drones is to gather information and data from an aerial vantage that can be used on the ground. Drones are also useful for recreational purposes. Drones are used by hobbyists, as well as by civil and government users.

The mission of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County (*the “District”*) is “to acquire, restore and manage lands for the purpose of protecting and preserving public open space with its natural wonders...and other landscapes with all of its associated wildlife, in a natural state for the education, pleasure and recreation of the public now and in the future.”

The unregulated launching and landing of Drones on District property may adversely affect the District restoration and conservation efforts, the District wildlife protection initiatives, and the public. The District has established procedures to help ensure compliance with the District mission and those legal obligations and to reduce risks to safety, security and privacy. The District will allow the use of Drones as defined in this Drone Usage Policy (“Policy”).

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Policy is to:

- 1) Provide clear and concise information regarding Drone Usage, including rules and regulations; and
- 2) Help the District comply with FAA laws and requirements, state laws, and any other applicable laws and/or regulations regarding Drones.

AFFECTED AREAS:

This Policy applies to all District employees.

DEFINITIONS:

Certificate of Authorization: shall mean an authorization issued by the ATO to the District for specific unmanned aircraft activity.

https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ato/service_units/systemops/aaim/organizations/uas/coa/

Drone: Drone shall mean an unmanned aircraft and all of the associated support equipment, control station, data links, telemetry, communications and navigation equipment necessary to operate the unmanned aircraft.

<https://www.faa.gov/uas/faq/#qn1>

Title: DRONE USAGE POLICY FOR FPCC EMPLOYEES	Page 2 of 4	Policy Number: 03.30.00
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PROCEDURE/PROCESS:

- 1) **Authorized Use:** Authorized use of Drones by District employees include:
 - a. Drone Usage for educational purposes, emergency and safety management purposes, planning purposes, and marketing and fundraising purposes.
 - b. Drone Usage must align with any applicable FAA Certificate of Authorization restrictions, and/or the policies described in Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulation (14 CFR) Part 107.
 - c. Any other use of Drones by District employees is prohibited unless otherwise approved by the General Superintendent, and/or his/her designee.

- 2) **Unauthorized Use:**
 - a. Any Drone usage that goes outside or in violation of the FAA Certificate of Authorization (COA) and/or Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulation (14 CFR) Part 107.
 - b. Drones shall not be used to monitor, photograph, or record areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy in accordance with accepted social norms. These areas include but are not limited to restrooms, locker rooms, resident watchman homes, changing or dressing rooms, etc.
 - c. Drones shall not be used for personal use and/or to monitor or record hallways, lounges, office spaces, or the insides of facilities.
 - d. Drones shall not be used to monitor or record sensitive District or personal information, which may be found, for example, on an individual's workspaces, on computer or other electronic displays.
 - e. Any Drone usage that would be in violation of privacy rights, civil rights and liberties, and transparency related federal/state/local laws, ordinances, policies, and procedures.
 - f. **Drone Users:**
 - Must maintain a visual line-of-sight with Drone in-flight at all times; and
 - May only operate one drone at one time.

- 3) **Transparency Policy:** Information obtained via drone technology may be subject to Freedom of Information Act (*FOIA*) requests.

- 4) **Purchase of Drones:**
 - a. **Request Requirements:** Departments who would like to purchase a Drone and/or Drone technology must make and receive prior approval from the General Superintendent, and/or his/her designee.
 - b. **Compliance:**
 - Any purchase of Drones, or Drone technology, must comply with this Policy and all other applicable policies, including but not limited to the District code and other policies, FAA rules and regulations, and other applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.
 - All Drones must have a Global Positioning System (*GPS*) and a transponder to track each unit. All Drones must have up-to-date firmware. In addition, District owned Drones must have signal encryption to protect the live stream of information.

Title: DRONE USAGE POLICY FOR FPCC EMPLOYEES	Page 3 of 4	Policy Number: 03.30.00
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- If reasonably priced, insurance should be purchased along with purchase of Drone.

5) **Employee Drone Usage:**

a. **Drone Users:**

- Must maintain a visual line-of-sight with Drone in-flight at all times; and
- May only operate one drone at one time.

b. **Drones:**

- May only be used in compliance with Certificate of Authorization;
- May not be used within five miles of an airport unless approved by the FAA;
- Must only reach a maximum altitude of 400 feet above ground level; and
- Must adhere to all FAA Temporary Flight Restrictions.

- 6) **Violations:** Any violations of District policies by District employees an individual will be dealt with in accordance with applicable District policies and procedures, which may include disciplinary actions up to and including termination from the District. Employee may also be subject to enforcement of applicable law.

REFERENCES:

Federal Aviation Administration

<http://www.faa.gov/uas>

<http://www.faa.gov/uas/registration/faqs/>

http://www.faa.gov/uas/resources/uas_regulations_policy/media/uas_fact_sheet_final.pdf

[14 C.F.R. part 107, Operation and Certification of Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems](#)

National Park Service

<https://www.nps.gov/buff/learn/news/use-of-unmanned-aircraft-banned-from-national-park-system.htm>

Forest Preserve District of Cook County

Model Airplane Flying Fields
(FPDCC Code Section 2-4-7)

Cook County Personnel Rules

Rule 8: Conduct and Discipline of Personnel

RESPONSIBILITY:

Drone Users: Drone Users shall: **(1)** adhere to this Policy; and **(2)** comply with FAA regulations, state and federal laws, and other local laws and/or policies.

Permits, Rentals and Concessions Department: The District Permits, Rentals and Concessions Department shall assist in the implementation of this Policy.

Law Enforcement Department: The District Law Enforcement Department shall assist in the implementation of this Policy.

Department Heads/Supervisors: Department Heads and supervisors shall be responsible for: **(1)** assisting in the implementation of this Policy; **(2)** complying with the rules, regulations, and spirit of the FAA Certificate of Authorization; and **(3)** communicating this policy to the employees under their direction when necessary.

Title: DRONE USAGE POLICY FOR FPCC EMPLOYEES	Page 4 of 4	Policy Number: 03.30.00
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District Employees: District employees shall adhere to this Policy.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

N/A

COMMUNICATION PLAN:

- 1) This Policy shall be posted on the District website, Shared Drive, and intranet.
- 2) District staff shall create a communication plan regarding elements of this police, to ensure that appropriate signage and/or other marketing related information is posted.

POLICY LEAD: Anthony D. Tindall
Policy & Special Projects Manager

APPROVAL: Arnold Randall
General Superintendent

POLICY HISTORY:

Approved: 07/08/2016

Revised: 11/28/2016

Revised: 06/13/2018

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions concerning District policies, please contact:

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