



Title:
DRONE USAGE POLICY FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Subject: GENERAL OPERATIONS	Page: 1 of 4	Policy Number: 03.20.00
Category: DISTRICTWIDE POLICY	Approval Date: 07/08/2016	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 constituents, individuals or entities that operate a Drone weighing more than 0.55 pounds (250 grams) and less than 55 pounds on District property (“Drone Users”).

https://www.faa.gov/uas/registration/faqs/media/UAS_Weights_Registration.pdf

Mini-Drones: Drones weighing 0.55 pounds or less must comply with the Rules & Regulations (*Excluding Rules #3 and #4*) established in this Policy. Drones that weigh 0.55 pounds or less will not be subject to insurance requirements. District Law Enforcement officers will not issue citations to minors (17 years old or younger).

DEFINITIONS:

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>

PROCEDURE/PROCESS:

- 1) Location Restriction Policy:** The District will allow Drone usage (*i.e. drones launching from, or landing on, District property*) only on designated areas, which might pose fewer risks to people, wildlife, and the District

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natural and cultural assets. Approved Drone locations (*Appendix A*) may include select: (1) approved model airfield locations; (2) approved designated recreational areas listed in the District Recreation Master Plan; and (3) other non-ecological sensitive location determined by the District.

Exceptions: The General Superintendent, and/or his/her designee, in consultation with the Resource Management Department, may grant an exception to the location restriction policy based on their discretion.

- 2) **Rules & Regulations:** Drones Users that use drones that take off from, or land on, District property must:
 - a. Ensure Drones are compliant with all applicable laws, ordinance, or policies, including without limitation FAA Rules and Regulations.
 - b. Use Drones in a courteous manner of others who are often present in the District for the quiet enjoyment of nature.
 - c. Hold either a (1) certificate of liability insurance (e.g. home owner’s insurance) naming the District as an additional insuree, and the insurance must have a liability limit of at least \$1 million; and/or (2) a current Academy of Model Aeronautics (“AMA”) membership.
 - d. Provide proof of insurance or AMA membership upon request.
 - e. Cease operations upon request by a member of District staff and/or other emergency safety related personnel.
 - f. Refrain from operating Drones in violation of privacy rights, civil rights and liberties, and transparency related federal/state/local laws, ordinances, policies, and procedures is prohibited.

- 3) **Violations:** Any breach of this Policy could result in termination of flyer right to use District property for Drone usage. **Law Enforcement members shall not issue citations the first year of the implementation of this policy, excluding repeat and/or gross offenses.*

- 4) **Liability Statement:** The District will not be held responsible for any damage to property or persons caused by non-District Drones.

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.

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

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

N/A

COMMUNICATION PLAN:

- 1) This Policy shall be distributed to Drone Users upon request and relative District staff.
- 2) This Policy shall be posted on the District website, Shared Drive, and intranet.

REFERENCES:

Federal Aviation Administration:
<http://www.faa.gov/uas>

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<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

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:

Forest Preserve District of Cook County
 Office of the General Superintendent
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Appendix A: Approved Drone Location Sites

The District will allow Drone usage (i.e. drones launching off from, or landing on, District property) only on designated areas, which might pose fewer risks to people, wildlife, and the District natural and cultural assets. The Approved Drone locations include:

Location	Address	Location Restriction	Time Restriction
Blue Star Memorial Woods	1152 Harms Road. Glenview, IL		
Deer Grove-East	2 W. Dundee Road Palatine, IL	At Model Airplane Flying Field Only	
Midlothian Meadows	15258 S. Pulaski Road Midlothian, IL		Prohibited Saturdays & Sundays Between Memorial Day & Labor Day
Miller Meadow-South	2175 S. 1 st Avenue Forest Park, IL	At Model Airplane Flying Field Only	
Ned Brown Meadow	3399 Golf Road Elk Grove, IL	At Model Airplane Flying Field Only	
Plum Creek Play Meadow	22225 Burnham Avenue Chicago Heights, IL		
Poplar Creek Model Airplane Flying Field	Shoe Factory Road Hoffman Estates, IL	At Model Airplane Flying Field Only	
Rolling Knolls	11N260 Rohrssen Road Elgin, IL		
Tampier Greenway Family Picnic Area	11175 135 th Street Orland Park, IL		
Thatcher Woods	8020 Chicago Avenue River Forest, IL		Prohibited Saturdays & Sundays Between Memorial Day & Labor Day
Thorn Creek Model Airplane Flying Field	18749 Stony Island Avenue Lynwood, IL	At Model Airplane Flying Field Only	
Tinley Creek Model Airplane Flying Field	19410 Cicero Avenue Matteson, IL	At Model Airplane Flying Field Only	

All sites are open year-round unless otherwise noted above.