

Educational Drone Information

Drones (remotely-piloted aircraft, autonomous, or otherwise unmanned aircraft) have become popular throughout Minnesota. Drones are used for commercial purposes like photography, mapping and structure inspection. They also serve government functions such as law enforcement or fire department situational awareness, hotspot mapping, and search and rescue. Regardless of how they are used, drones are aircraft. All aircraft are **regulated under state and federal law**.

When considering drones as part of a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program, please remember the following considerations:

1. **Register the drone(s):** Use the [Federal Aviation Administration \(FAA\) Drone Zone website](http://dronezone.faa.gov/) (<http://dronezone.faa.gov/>). Government-owned aircraft must be registered. Minnesota school districts meet the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) definition of government.
2. **Secure insurance for the drone(s):** You should be able to secure a rider attached to the school/district's insurance. Proof of insurance is required to register.
3. **Familiarize yourself with Minnesota regulations:** Aviation is regulated in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 360, which may be accessed and searched at no cost via the [Office of the Revisor of Statutes website](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/360) (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/360>). Some communities in Minnesota have enacted ordinances which may affect the operation of drones. MnDOT takes no position on the validity of any local ordinance. Check the [MnDOT website](https://www.dot.state.mn.us/aero/drones/local.html) (<https://www.dot.state.mn.us/aero/drones/local.html>) for a list of local ordinances. This list is not exhaustive. It is always the drone operator's responsibility to comply with federal, state and local law.
4. **Be aware of controlled and uncontrolled airspace:** Check out the [b4ufly app from the FAA](https://www.faa.gov/uas/recreational_fliers/where_can_i_fly/b4ufly/) (https://www.faa.gov/uas/recreational_fliers/where_can_i_fly/b4ufly/).

Drone Safety Tips

([Getting Started tips from FAA](https://www.faa.gov/uas/getting_started/): https://www.faa.gov/uas/getting_started/)

- Register your drone
- Fly your drone at or below 400 feet
- Keep your drone within your line of sight
- Be aware of FAA airspace restrictions
- Respect privacy
- Never fly near other aircraft, especially near airports
- Never fly over people, public events, or stadiums full of people (*waiver required*)
- Never fly near emergencies such as fires or hurricane recovery efforts
- Never fly under the influence of drugs or alcohol

Resources

- The basic starting point for any drone pilot should be the [FAA's UAS portal](https://www.faa.gov/uas/) (https://www.faa.gov/uas/)
- The FAA produces [webinars on many topics related to drone safety](https://www.faa.gov/uas/resources/webinars/) (https://www.faa.gov/uas/resources/webinars/)
- The FAA Safety Team has a [free online course](https://www.faasafety.gov/gslac/ALC/CourseLanding.aspx?CID=451) intended for manned aircraft pilots transitioning to unmanned aircraft operations. This course may also be useful to non-pilots preparing to take the §107 knowledge test. (https://www.faasafety.gov/gslac/ALC/CourseLanding.aspx?CID=451)
- MnDOT has produced a series of outreach [videos on drone etiquette](https://www.tpt.org/drone-etiquette/) in conjunction with Twin Cities PBS (https://www.tpt.org/drone-etiquette/)

For Additional Questions

More information is available from the Minnesota Department of Transportation-UAS Department.

Contact [Minnesota Department of Transportation DroneInfo](mailto:droneinfo.dot@state.mn.us) (droneinfo.dot@state.mn.us), 612-297-9525.