



FLYING DRONES

AT KITE EVENTS OR AROUND KITE FLIERS

DRONES ARE BEING USED MORE THESE DAYS TO CAPTURE INTERESTING VIDEO AND PHOTOS

As drone flying is becoming more accessible to the everyday enthusiast, the chance of a drone flying at your next kite event is increasing. As a drone pilot make sure to check with the event before flying. It may not be permitted, and you could end up in trouble. Here are a few tips we have learned from both the sides.

DRONE PILOTS

THE FAA REGULATES ALL DRONES

The Federal Aviation Administration technically regulates all drones, even hobby fliers. All drones should have a registration number. As a drone pilot you should take the few minutes (and \$5) to register your drone.

Take note, that there are special rules for each category and usage of drone. The FAA also implements special rules for certain areas, and this can impact whether or not you are legally permitted to fly. Always check with the FAA before flying.

BE A GOOD STEWARD

Even the quietest of drones flying overhead can feel invasive to someone. While an events overall public media policy may clear you of taking photos in the public realm, a regular camera feels less intrusive than a drone. Ask your intended subjects before you film or take a photo.

Taking an extra minute to let kite fliers know that you are flying a drone nearby goes a long way to spreading good cheer, and saving equipment.

DON'T GET TOO CLOSE

Generally, due to most current drones design, if your drone comes into contact with a kite, the most likely outcome is that it will stop and either become tangled in the lines or fall out of the sky. There is a chance of it cutting through sails and shredding a kite. Do not rely on the drones obstacle avoidance to see a fast moving kite or worse, kite lines. It is imperative to have clear line of sight while flying at all times. Kites and lines rarely stay in the same place.

HAVE A FLIGHT PLAN

To get the best shots, and the easiest way to work with kites and kite fliers is to have a flight plan. If you know where they will be, and they know where you will be, it is easier to avoid any accidents. This sounds like common sense, but it is easy to overlook. Take a second to communicate with the kite fliers, it is well worth the extra time it takes.

KITE FLIERS

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING.... SAY SOMETHING

If you see a drone flying, make sure to announce it and let your fellow kite fliers know. This is not a normal enough occurrence that kite fliers are prepared to watch out for one invading their wind window.

DON'T GET TOO CLOSE

Be very aware of your proximity to a drone. If it is an unexpected drone and you do not want to be filmed, do not attempt to chase it away with your kite. Chances are you will damage your kite. Instead, land, and attempt to find the pilot and have a conversation with them just like you would another kite flier.

ORGANIZERS

AS AN ORGANIZER, YOU CAN RESTRICT DRONE FLYING

For most public events or festivals, you can create a 'no-drone-zone'. The FAA has resources for helping post notifications and more.

YOU MAY BE RESPONSIBLE

The laws regarding drone flying at public events is playing catch up to the growing trend. Insurance policies may already contain wording that will dictate whether or not you can allow drones at your event.

SHOULD YOU BAN, CONTROL, OR LOOK THE OTHER WAY?

Instead of completely banning all drone flying, think about encouraging them to check in at the information booth prior to flying. As an organizer you can then relay any local regulations, concerns from kite fliers, or guide them to safe flying areas. You have the added benefit of being able to check for FAA registration.

FREE MEDIA?!

Word of mouth and the prolific sharing on social media of photos and videos is one of the best ways to advertise for your event. If you are proactive and establish a way of communicating with potential drone pilots, you can encourage them to share your message, links, or other relevant information.