



Aircraft Noise

Fact Sheet

1. Who controls aircraft in the sky?

The Hawthorne Municipal Airport does not control aircraft in flight. The FAA manages airspace, establishes flight patterns, implements flight procedures and corridors, and determines minimum flight altitudes for aircraft.

All aircraft movements are controlled through the FAA National Airspace System. The FAA is responsible for managing airspace and for ensuring the safe and efficient flow of aircraft traffic. Only the pilot, using guidance from FAA, has control over the aircraft while in flight. The Hawthorne Airport does not control or regulate aircraft schedules or aircraft movements.

2. Why do flights go over residential neighborhoods? Isn't that prohibited?

Flying over residential areas is not prohibited.

3. Do pilots or the FAA need my permission to fly aircraft over my city?

No. Per United States Code 49 USC 40103:

- The United States Government has exclusive sovereignty of airspace of the United States.
- A citizen of the United States has a public right of transit through the navigable airspace.

4. Who do I call if I have a complaint about noise from an aircraft?

You can call the Hawthorne Municipal Airport and we will research your complaint and provide you with feedback. We will also give you information regarding the obligations of both the Airport and the FAA. However, it is the FAA that exercises control of aircraft noise through noise emission standards, air traffic control, and pilot and flight regulations. FAA funded noise compatibility studies are also conducted in conjunction with the Airport but they only affect the immediate vicinity of the Airport per the FAA criteria.

Some Airports have noise ordinances that restrict aircraft operations that predate the Federal Aircraft Noise Capacity Act (ANCA) of 1990. These noise ordinances are grandfathered under ANCA. This act does not permit the enactment of new airport flight/noise restrictions without federal approval, which has been withheld in all cases to-date. Therefore, the City cannot ban any specific type or size of aircraft from operating at the Airport based on noise levels.

5. What is the Hawthorne Municipal Airport responsible for?

The Hawthorne Municipal Airport is responsible for ensuring that the runway, taxiways, and other facilities are in good working condition, meet FAA regulations, and are available for use by the public.

6. Is there a curfew for aircraft at the Hawthorne Municipal Airport?

The Hawthorne Municipal Airport does not have a curfew for aircraft. The FAA requires that this Airport be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. When Airports receive Federal assistance, they also must agree to accept certain obligations and conditions associated with that assistance called grant assurances. Grant assurances require that Airports remain open to the public.

7. Is there a minimum altitude airplanes can fly over residential areas?

Per Part 91.119 of the Code of Federal Aviation Regulations, fixed wing airplanes must maintain a minimum altitude of 1,000 feet when operating over congested or densely populated areas. This requirement does not apply when aircraft are landing or taking off.

Code of Federal Regulations 14 CFR 91.119:

- *Over congested areas.* Over any congested area of a city, town, or settlement, or over any open air assembly of persons, an altitude of 1,000 feet above the highest obstacle within a horizontal radius of 2,000 feet of the aircraft.
- *Over other than congested areas.* An altitude of 500 feet above the surface, except over open water or sparsely populated areas. In those cases, the aircraft may not be operated closer than 500 feet to any person, vessel, vehicle, or structure.

However, this requirement does not apply to arriving and departing aircraft.

8. Why doesn't the Airport require pilots to fly at higher altitudes or routes directing them over non-residential areas?

Airports do not determine the altitudes or flight paths aircraft use. The authority to determine altitudes or flight paths is held by the FAA (Air Traffic Control) and the pilot operating the aircraft. The Hawthorne Municipal Airport does not control air traffic.

9. What is the minimum altitude for helicopters?

According to FAA, helicopters have no minimum altitude requirements when weather, safety and other air traffic permit. See Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) Part 91.119.

Title 14 - Aeronautics and Space

91.119 Minimum safe altitudes; general

- **(d) - Helicopters.** Helicopters may be operated at less than the minimums prescribed in paragraph (b) or (c) of this section if the operation is conducted without hazard to persons or property on the surface. In addition, each person operating a helicopter shall comply with routes or altitudes specifically prescribed for helicopters by the Administrator.

10. Who do I call if I think I saw an aircraft do something that I thought was unsafe?

Aircraft safety questions should be referred to the FAA's local Flight Standards District Office (FSDO). A list of FSDOs can be found at: http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/field_offices/fsdo/ scroll down to the bottom of the page and you will see a list of functions covered by the FSDO. The local FSDO office can be found at:

https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/field_offices/fsdo/lax/