Fly Your Drone Responsibly

In light of the growing popularity of commercial and recreation use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), commonly referred to as drones, Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport Authority is advising operators of the procedures for notification and safe operation.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has issued specific guidelines for the operation of both commercial and recreational unmanned aircraft. The guidelines include general operating rules including altitude restrictions, and the requirement to contact the FAA to coordinate flight activity.

Operators of commercial and recreational unmanned aircraft operating within a five-mile radius of the airport must contact the Airport Community Relations Coordinator at (480) 406-7464 to coordinate flight activity with the Air Traffic Control Tower.

Here are some key tips to fly safely:

• Drones cannot be operated within a 5 mile radius of any towered airport without notifying the airport and the control tower (Gateway Airport airspace map below).

• Never fly your drone near a manned aircraft

• Fly your drone under 400 feet and not near stadiums, airports, public buildings and large groups of people

• Always fly your drone within your direct line of sight

• If you see a drone safety issue, call your local law enforcement

For information on operations outside of controlled airspace, as well as general operating and flight rules, please visit www.knowbeforeyoufly.org

Additionally, effective December 21, 2015, anyone who owns a small unmanned aircraft of a certain weight must register with the Federal Aviation Administration’s Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) registry before they fly outdoors. People who do not register could face civil and criminal penalties. See: FAA Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Registration