



City of Yakima

News Release

Subject: Airport Calls For Drone Safety in Rattlesnake Ridge Area

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Release Date: Friday, January 19th, 2018

Airport Calls For Drone Safety in Rattlesnake Ridge Area

The appearance of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), also known as drones, over the Rattlesnake Ridge area is prompting a call for safety by Yakima Air Terminal-McAllister Field officials.

"Ninety-five percent of the air traffic at the airport comes from east of the Valley and they are flying over the potential site of the landslide," Airport Director Rob Peterson said today, Friday, during a press conference about the impending landslide at Rattlesnake Ridge.

He said there has been an increase in the number of drones flying over the ridge since the landslide was discovered.

At issue is the fact that Rattlesnake Ridge is within a 5-nautical mile radius of the City's airport.

Federal laws require UAS operators to provide 24-hour notice to the airport and traffic control tower before flying their drones over Rattlesnake Ridge.

"That gives us time to process the request and alert any aircraft," Peterson said. "It's critical that drones are operated safely."

Besides providing 24-hour notice, Peterson said UAS operators should fly their drones not more than 400 feet above the ground.

Cracks have been found on the ridge and a 20-acre section is moving south at about 1.7 feet per week.

The City of Yakima, Yakima County and the City of Union Gap have all declared emergencies due to the landslide. Many homes in the Thorp Road area have been evacuated.

Visit <https://www.faa.gov/uas/> for more information about federal restrictions on drone flights.

For more about Yakima Air Terminal-McAllister Field, visit <https://flyykm.com/>