

The Diablo Aviator

A Publication of Contra Costa County Airports

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Airport Security Project Update

Airport security has been at the forefront of everyone's mind as TSA continues to propose and implement more stringent requirements. At Buchanan Field Airport, staff has been working with our consultants to enhance security which includes a new security gate access system. The new system, which is anticipated to be in place by the end of 2011, will require issuing of new access cards to tenants. This process will likely involve some inconveniences to our tenants but we are working hard to making this process painless as possible.

Airport staff will be working with the Aviation Advisory Committee, Board of Supervisors Airport Committee and stakeholders to review our proposed process and implementation plan. We welcome input from all stakeholders during these meetings to try and address any concerns. We will be posting the new Access Card Agreement form to our website. This online Agreement will allow tenants to fill in the form in on the computer and then print out for signature. More information regarding this process will follow.

As with any new system there may be some unforeseen glitches that will need to be worked through. Your patience and cooperation through this process is greatly appreciated. The process will continue to be discussed during April and May Aviation Advisory and Airport Committee meetings. The following are being considered:

- \$30 deposit for the new access cards; existing key card deposits can be transferred to new access cards
- \$50 fee for replacing lost or damaged access cards (current fee is \$30)
- Allowing one access card per tenant (new provision)
- Tenants may sponsor up to two affiliates if they provide justification and assume responsibility for affiliate; such as spouse, child, flying partner (new provision)
- Proof of a valid driver's license and vehicle insurance (insurance is a new provision)
- Having leasehold tenants approve a subtenant's sponsorship of affiliate access on their leasehold premises (variation of current practice)
- Limiting tenant access to gates proximate to their hangar or tie-down location (variation of current practice)

If you are unable to attend the Aviation Advisory or Airport Committee meetings written suggestions and/or comments would be appreciated. Please direct comments to Keith Freitas, Director of Airports, either by mail at 550 Sally Ride Drive, Concord, CA 94520 or via email at kfrei@airport.cccounty.us

Attention County Hangar Tenants:

Only persons who are named on and sign the Hangar Rental Agreements are permitted to occupy the County hangars; these agreements are not transferable to an heir if they are not named on and a signatory party to the agreement. As such, please consider if you would like to add a spouse or other heir to your hangar agreements. In order to change your hangar agreements, the added party(ies) are required to be included on the aircraft registration and insurance. Airport staff must be provided copies of these revised forms so that we may assist you in executing new hangar agreements at no cost.

Storm Water and You

Did you know that every airport in California must have a Storm Water General Permit through the California State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB)? This permit requires that the Airport has a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) in place. This plan lists the hazardous materials handled and stored at the airport, where they are potentially stored and the procedures that are followed to prevent these materials from being released into the storm water system. Periodically, water samples are taken from the storm water system and are evaluated by a laboratory. Those results then get filed with the SWRCB.

How does this affect you? As a tenant your actions have a direct effect on the environment of the airport. Any action that adversely affects storm water quality puts your airport at risk of a minimum fine of \$37,000 per incident by the state Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These fines can quickly add up as the EPA can penalize for each prior storm, in the current wet season (October to June), in which they presume a similar incident occurred.

The most effective ways you can help keep the Airport in compliance is:

- Never wash or rinse your aircraft on the ramp or between the hangars. Aircraft must be washed or rinsed on the aircraft wash rack which has an oil/water separator.
- Never change fluids on the ramp or between the hangars. Fluid changes need to be performed in a covered area to prevent being washed into storm drains. The Airport provides an Owner Maintenance Hangar, for your use, which has spill supplies and a nearby waste oil convault.
- Contact Operations at (925) 646-5722 when a spill occurs and ask for assistance in cleanup.

By working together we can continue to make our Airports the best they can be.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Update

NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is proposing to amend existing overflight regulations for Channel Islands, Monterey Bay, Gulf of the Farallones and Olympic Coast national marine sanctuaries. The proposed amendment would standardize the application of the existing regulations across the west coast sanctuaries.

NOAA's primary goal is to ensure pilots are fully aware of the long-standing restrictions on low overflights within designated zones in west coast national marine sanctuaries. NOAA Sanctuaries is working with the FAA to revise the notation on aeronautical charts to indicate the sanctuaries overflight regulations. Pilot awareness of these regulations for the sensitive wildlife areas would result in improved compliance and enhance protection of seabirds and marine mammals. These changes would potentially reduce risk to pilots and aircraft from bird strikes.

Mowing Methods Revisited

Each year, around April and May, the Airport staff gets questioned about why the infields and vacant lands around the Airport are not being mowed. Many years of managing the grasses on the airports have proved that the primary maintenance nemesis and the most dangerous to aircraft operations is the starthistle.

Throughout the spring months the starthistle lies dormant under the shade of the other grasses such as rye and wild oats. Those tall grasses, unlike the starthistle, are easily traversed by aircraft. Once the thistle comes up, it grows rapidly, is very hard to cut and can easily flip over small aircraft that venture into it.

The vegetation management technique that works best is to do no mowing until the first of June. That allows the rye grasses and oats to 1) dry out the soil, depleting the supply of moisture available to the starthistle, 2) provide shade to the small thistle plants that are just coming up in late spring, and 3) allow the ryes and oats to generate seed, perpetuating wanted vegetation.

After the first cutting, the County's herbicide spray crew sprays the starthistle that does come up without harming the ryes and oats that are then dormant. That process has many benefits. It controls the starthistle, reduces mowing costs, and makes a safer aviation-operating environment. The drawbacks are that the airport starts looking a bit shaggy in April and May each year. Please be patient. There is a method to the madness!
