

# Unmanned Aircraft Systems Information

## UAS or “Drones”

Why does the FAA regulate the use of drones?

A drone is an aircraft and the FAA is mandated to regulate all aircraft to protect persons and property on the ground and to prevent collisions in the air.

I just purchased a drone. What do I need to do first?

ALL drones between .55 pounds and 55 pounds must be registered with the FAA at [faa.gov](http://faa.gov). Operators of drones used for commercial purposes must also pass an FAA examination.

Are there age restrictions?

To register you must be 13 years of age or older ( if the drone owner is less than 13 years of age, a person 13 years of age or older must register the drone and will be the responsible party )

When can I fly my drone?

Drones can only be flown during daylight hours

Drones must be flown within sight of the operator and below 400 feet  
Drones cannot be flown within five miles of an airport without prior approval. Locally, the Fairhope Airport Authority must be contacted for authorization to fly by calling 990-5080.

You may have to wait for a call-back.

### **DRONES CANNOT BE FLOWN:**

- Near emergency response scenes
- Over public events such as parades or sports events
  - From a moving vehicle
    - Over people
    - At night

All rules are subject to a waiver from the FAA

You can also download the FAA 's B4UFLY app to check if there are any other restrictions in the area where you wish to fly.

Where can I  
fly my drone  
and are there  
other regulations?

What are the penalties for drone violations?

Failure to register a drone can result in a maximum civil penalty up to \$27,500 (based on existing FAA requirements that may be amended in the future specifically for drones )

Recent FAA penalties have averaged \$400 to \$5,000 but can certainly increase based on the severity of the incident.

Criminal penalties can reach \$250,000 or three years in prison.

Fines and charges may also be pursued for failure to obey regulation or flying in a reckless manner.

Operators are also susceptible to civil lawsuits related to harassment, damage to property or personal injury.

Can local police enforce FAA regulations for drones?

Yes.

Primarily, the FAA will issue warning notices, issue fines or withdraw flight privileges for offenders.

However, local law enforcement officers have authorization to enforce FAA restrictions.

Also, existing criminal charges can be applied based on the situation.