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McMahon-Wrinkle Airport & Industrial Park



Recent Airport Activity

The airport has been quite busy the past few months. We have had two Croman Firefighter Heli-tankers out of Oregon stationed here as well as a consistent flow of air traffic. We have had visitors from as far away as Austria, and had several jet engine aircraft on the ramp over the past few weeks, often several at a time!

On February 27th, a large grassfire ripped through the western portion of the airpark, threatening several local businesses and buildings, including the DPS Office, CeramKote/Freecom, the U.S. Flight Academy, Gaston Rac-

ing, and the Festival of Lights building which houses all displays for the Parade of Lights at Comanche Trail Park. With the help of the City Fire Department as well as crews from the Howard County Volunteer Fire Department, no serious damage or injuries were sustained.

If you see a tractor roaming the airport, there's no need to worry. It's our friends from Kansas, collecting baby Prairie Dogs. Each spring, they come to the Big Spring Airport to help us keep the critter's ever-growing population under control.

Recent Landings & Aircraft Photos



Pilot's Briefing

HIGH DENSITY ALTITUDE IS NOT YOUR FRIEND *By Wayne Dawson*

Absolute altitude: while looking down, if the cows look small you are high and life is good. But achieving absolute altitude is a matter of overcoming density altitude. Density altitude is pressure altitude corrected for nonstandard temperature. It is a theoretical value used to predict aircraft performance. Air density is the single most important factor in determining aircraft performance. It directly effects the production of lift, as well as engine and propeller performance. When density altitude is higher than your actual physical altitude, aircraft performance will be degraded. Your takeoff roll will be longer and your rate of climb will be slower. Standard temperature is 59 degrees Fahrenheit. Well guess what, almost every day in west Texas is a lot warmer than 59 degrees Fahrenheit. So the density altitude has to be higher than the field elevation. We are fortunate at Big Spring to have a runway so long that the departure end is obscured by the earth's curvature. But your destination may be a runway with both letters and numbers in its identifier and/or a field elevation that is higher. Be smart, first use your POH to determine the takeoff distance for both your departure and arrival runways, and then

crank up the engine. If you find yourself on your back, at the departure end of the runway, at zero absolute altitude, staring up at the cows and they look really big, it could be you neglected to consider density altitude in your flight planning.

Altitude is measured six ways. We've discussed three: Absolute altitude is the aircraft's actual height above the earth's surface, Pressure altitude is the altitude displayed on the altimeter when it is set to standard pressure 29.92 in. Hg., and Density altitude is Pressure altitude for nonstandard temperature 59 degrees Fahrenheit. Do you remember the remaining three?

Sure. Indicated altitude is the altitude read on the altimeter when it is set to the current barometric pressure, Calibrated altitude is Indicated altitude corrected for instrument error, and True altitude is the actual height of an object above mean sea level.

Words of Wisdom

"The desire to fly is an idea handed down to us by our ancestors who... looked enviously on the birds soaring freely through space... on the infinite highway of the air."

~Wilbur Wright

Safety Committee

SAVE THE DATE!!!

There will be a Pilot Safety Meeting at 7:00 pm, immediately following the 5:30 pm Airport Board Meeting on May 19, 2011.

John Boatright, Safety Program Manager, Lubbock FSDO will be giving a presentation, titled: "There are No Rules on Friday." It will be a practical overview of the FARs, focusing on forgotten rules that have led to accidents. Eligible attendees will receive one hour of WINGS credit.

Wayne Dawson is the new Pilot Safety Committee Chairman!

Wayne holds a Commercial Pilot license with Single and Multiengine Land; Instrument Airplane; Glider ratings as well as a Ground Instructor; Advanced Instrument license. He currently flies an RV7A which he completed building in 2007 and now hangs here at Big Spring.

Bad Attitudes!

On February 17, 2011, about 2040 central standard time, a Cessna 182P airplane, N325LA, was destroyed during a loss of control following a touch-and-go maneuver at the Levelland Municipal Airport (LLN), Levelland, TX. The private pilot and one passenger were fatally injured and the two remaining passengers sustained serious injuries...

Reportedly, the pilot had departed LBB with the intention of flying to LLN to perform touch-and-go maneuvers. An individual, located in a house approximately 1,100-feet west of the accident site, reported that about 2040 she heard an airplane's engine either accelerate or decelerate followed by a "thud" sound. The ear witness then elected to go out on her front

porch, but not seeing anything unusual she went back inside. About 30 minutes later one of the surviving passengers was able to crawl to her neighbor's house for help.

The airplane came to rest in an inverted position 3,045-feet from the approach end of runway 17 and approximately 62-feet east from the runways edge. There was no evidence of a post crash fire. Runway 17 was a 6,100-foot long by 75-foot wide asphalt runway.

At 2040, the West Texas Mesonet weather observation facility at Levelland, Texas, approximately 1.75 miles southeast of the accident site, reported wind from 267 degrees at 10 MPH gusting to 11 MPH. Info courtesy of: www.nts.gov

Airport Director's Update

The best of times, the worst of times...

In eight years as director of the Big Spring Airport and Industrial Park, I have never seen a more interesting, exciting, challenging, rewarding, frustrating-- and promising-- time period than we are in today. The really BIG plus is that we've remained accident-free, aviation-wise, during this time. For that, you get the credit-- keep it up! Otherwise, we've had major brush fires overrunning the airport, record highs and low temperatures, rare icing forcing runway closure, blinding dust storms, extreme high winds, and the biggest invasion of prairie dogs this airport has ever seen. In the midst of, and in spite of all that, we have had a large volume of corporate and general aviation traffic, the most helicopter activity we've ever seen, and good utilization of Runway 17/35, our new concrete runway with its recently implemented WAAS system. In spite of the economy, several airpark businesses



are expanding and new aviation related businesses are coming to the airport. We appreciate having an air ambulance here full time, and two fire-fighting helicopters staged here during this "Red Flag Warning" season. We are also delighted to have several new airplanes taking residence, and excited over the prospect of a vintage war bird coming to stay with us in the very near future. More details to come... Stay safe! Jim L.

GIVE US THE SCOOP!

If you would like to make comments or suggestions regarding this newsletter, please call 432-264-2362 or send an email to: kgrant@mybigspring.com

We'd love to hear from you!

McMahon-Wrinkle Airport & Industrial Park

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We're on the web!

[Www.mybigspring.com/pages/airport](http://www.mybigspring.com/pages/airport)

Pilot Safety Meeting: Thursday, May 19th — 7:00 pm

**“There are No Rules on Friday.” presented by John Boatright
from the Lubbock FSDO. WINGS credit will be given!**

UPCOMING AIRPORT ACTIVITIES:

Prairie Dog Fly In Breakfast—June 11th : 8–10 am... Don't Miss It!!!

Terminal Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Fixed Base Operator:

Lone Star Aviation
Phone: (432) 264-7124
Fax: (432) 264-7406
Call Out: (432) 935-1238

The Big Spring McMahon-Wrinkle Airport, owned and operated by the City of Big Spring, is a general aviation airport. The airport, which occupies approximately 2,200 acres of land, operates two runways: Runway 17/35, which measures 8,802 feet in length and 100 feet in width; and Runway 06/24, measuring 4,601 feet in length and 75 feet in width. Aviation activities that occur at the airport on a regular basis include agricultural spraying, corporate use, flight instruction, and recreational flying. The airport has hosted annual fly-ins and air shows, and maintains the Hangar 25 Air Museum. In 2007, the airport hosted the Hang Gliding World Championships. The Big Spring Air Terminal is over 4,000 sq. ft. with a conference room, passenger waiting area, courtesy car and airpark office. The Pilot's Lounge includes weather monitoring and flight planning capability, wireless internet connection and concessions.