

Helicopter safety is a team effort involving ground personnel and the flight crew.

Remember:

- Protect yourself first; hearing/eye protection is highly recommended.
- The designated air-to-ground frequency should be protected from all other radio traffic during helicopter approach and departure.
- NEVER turn your back to a running helicopter.
- NEVER approach the helicopter without the assistance of the flight crew.
- In the event of a helicopter emergency, (i.e., hard landing/roll over,) NEVER approach the aircraft until all components have come to a complete stop.
- ALWAYS be on alert for the unexpected (unseen aerial hazards, civilians in the L.Z., blowing debris, etc.)

CALSTAR provides air ambulance service. Each aircraft is staffed with one pilot and two critical care flight nurses. CALSTAR is usually activated by the Incident Command System. Our goal is to provide you, the first-responder, an additional resource at scene and rapid transport if required. Remember, do not hesitate to request an air ambulance early; you may cancel that request at any time.

CALSTAR AIRCRAFT Capabilities Include:

- Cruise speed of over 135 MPH
- Aircraft well suited for high altitude operations
- Equipped with night vision equipment to enhance operational safety
- IFR flight capabilities (select bases)
- 30 million candle-power search light
- Two patient transport*
- GPS Navigation

**Operational conditions vary. Two patient transports may not always be possible. Notify the flight crew ASAP to inquire about two patient capabilities.*

CALSTAR CREW Qualifications Include:

Pilot:

- Minimum experience of 3,000 hours of pilot-in-command time
- Trained under FAA PART 135 Air Carrier standards
- Night Vision Device qualified
- Extensive local area knowledge

Flight R.N.:

- Minimum 5 years critical care experience
- Certification includes: CFRN, CCRN, ACLS, PALS, NRP, and TNATC
- Scope of practice includes:
 - R.S.I.
 - Surgical Cric
 - Ventilator Management

CALSTAR



HELICOPTER SAFETY For the First Responder



CALIFORNIA SHOCK TRAUMA AIR RESCUE
A NONPROFIT COMMUNITY SERVICE

CALSTAR | Helicopter Safety for the First Responder

Landing Zone Selection

1. Choose an area in which the surface is flat, firm, and free of loose debris. If dust is suspected, wet down the area with water and inform the flight crew of this potential hazard.
2. Follow these general guidelines for landing zone dimensions.

Daytime: 75 ft X 75 ft

Nighttime: 125 ft X 125 ft

3. The landing zone should be free of people, animals, and vehicles. Special attention should be given to ensure that the zone is free of overhead obstructions such as wires, poles, and antennas. The surface of the zone should be free of stumps, irrigation equipment or any other obstruction that could interfere with the helicopter's landing gear. The landing zone official should delegate personnel as required for adequate crowd control.
4. During nighttime conditions, illuminate the landing zone by positioning vehicle headlights toward the center of the zone. NEVER use flares or other items that can be easily blown by the helicopter downwash.

Landing the Helicopter

1. You can assist the helicopter crew with locating your scene by using the proper radio terminology. State your position as referenced to "clock" positions from the helicopter's perspective. The front of the aircraft is "12 O'Clock," the rear of the aircraft is "6 O'Clock" and so on. "Code 3" lighting can significantly aid the helicopter crew in locating your position at night.
2. Once radio communication is established and the aircraft is circling overhead, the landing zone official should inform the flight crew of the following minimum information:
 - a) Describe the location of all nearby aerial hazards, i.e., wires, poles, and antennas.
 - b) Describe the landing zone surface and specific touchdown area with special emphasis given to potential dust/loose debris.
 - c) Describe the wind speed and direction.
 - d) Describe any issue that you believe could adversely affect flight safety.
3. Once the aircraft is on final approach, protect the air-to-ground frequency and never hesitate to announce any previously unseen hazard to the flight crew.

Assisting the Helicopter Crew

1. **NEVER** approach the helicopter unless escorted by a flight crew member. Follow their direction at all times.
2. **ALWAYS** stay to the front of the helicopter and in eye contact with the pilot.
3. **BE AWARE** that sloping terrain can increase the hazard of the helicopter's rotors.
4. Secure loose items. NEVER chase items that have been blown away.
5. Hearing and vision protection is highly recommended.
6. After the helicopter departs the landing zone, never infiltrate the area until the pilot has called "clear."



CALSTAR assumes no responsibility or liability for incidents or damages in connection with the use of this handout. This material is intended for informational use only and does not purport to address all safety considerations involved with aircraft operations.