

SAFETY FIRST



Falcon Field Airport City-Owned Hangar and Storage Rooms September 29, 2011

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Thanks to all tenants who participated in the meetings held recently to discuss the City-Owned Hangar and Storage Room Usage Rules. Those who attended the meetings asked many pertinent and thoughtful questions. While we were able to answer some of them at the meeting(s), a few required additional research. Here are the answers for those remaining questions, as well as others that have been asked since then.

Q: There have been many new rules and regulations implemented in the last several years at Falcon Field. Why can't we go back to the way it was in the past?

A: The City has made a commitment to you, the citizens of Mesa, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the State of Arizona that it will provide a safe and well-maintained airport. We also strive for a quality airport that continues to be a good neighbor and an economic engine for Mesa. Sometimes rules and regulations are necessary to make sure the City follows through on these commitments. Sometimes rules are needed to create clarity and consistency for all of us. The City is not creating new rules for the sake of having them; conversely, we are doing this to protect you, your visitors, your property, the property/investments of the City and to ensure the continued success of Falcon Field and its tenants within an ever-changing worldwide economy and environment.

Q: We've never had a fire at Falcon Field, so why do we have to worry about what's in the hangars/storage rooms?

A: There have been at least 2 incidents of fires in the City-owned hangars in the past. Furthermore, fires have occurred in similar types of hangars at other airports. These new rules are about fire prevention to protect you, your visitors, and your property, along with City assets.

Q: Are the Hangar/Storage Room Rules a ploy on the City's part to get rid of the recreational aviation tenants at Falcon Field?

A: No. The recreational aviation tenants at Falcon Field are a vital and critical part of the airport's success now and in the future. The most successful airports are those that have a diversity of tenants and users.

While it's important that Falcon Field grow its corporate and business traffic, it's also important to maintain a strong base of recreational aviation tenants and users. The City has invested a lot of time and money into constructing and maintaining the City-owned hangars/storage rooms and the infrastructure adjacent to them (i.e. taxilanes, taxiways, aircraft parking ramps, and vehicle access roads). Our goal is to keep the hangars and storage rooms rented to aviation tenants who wish to store their aircraft at Falcon Field, regardless of whether they are used for business or recreation. Both are welcome.

Q: Is there a deadline date for me to complete the construction of my project/kit-built aircraft?

A: The City has not placed a deadline date for tenants to complete their project/kit-built aircraft because it takes longer to complete some aircraft than others. However, because there is still a five (5) year waiting list for the hangars, tenants will need to demonstrate that they are making progress on completing their aircraft to validate that the hangar is being used for an aeronautical purpose and not for the storage of items that could otherwise be stored at the tenant's home or other off-airport storage location.

Q: Why do hangars with project/kit-built aircraft have to be inspected every six (6) months?

During initial reviews of the City Code, it was discovered that there was no provision to allow for project/kit-built aircraft in any of the City-owned hangars. Since project/kit-built aircraft are an important member of the aircraft family that is based here at Falcon Field, the City's Building Official agreed to implement a Code modification to continue allowing this type of aircraft in the hangars as long as the hangars are inspected by the City every six (6) months. These inspections will be conducted to ensure that there is no hazardous work being performed inside the hangar and to ensure that progress is being made on the aircraft's construction.

Q: Does the rule requiring that appliances be raised 18" above the floor apply to appliances with sealed motors and contacts?

A: If the motor and motor contacts for the appliance are sealed components, the appliance does not need to be raised 18" above the floor because the running motors are not likely to be exposed to fuel vapors that are located close to the ground.

Q: Does my air conditioning unit with a submersible pump need to be raised 18" off the floor?

A: Yes. Unless the blower motor is sealed inside the unit, it must be raised 18" off the floor.

Q: Why can't I store my boat, RV, classic car or records and files in my hangar?

A: The primary and intended use for the hangars is for aircraft storage. This is what the Federal Aviation Administration and the State of Arizona are expecting them to be used for. (Note: The State loaned the City money to build many of the hangars for aircraft storage). This is also what the City building permit for the hangars specifies that they be used for. Here are more specifics for each of these uses:

- **Boats and RV's:** The hangars are not permitted for the storage of these types of vehicles because there are no fire suppression systems installed in the structure and because they are non-aeronautical uses of the hangar. Also, boats and RVs are considered to be combustible materials that create additional hazards when stored along with the combustible aircraft in the hangar.

- **Classic Cars:** Like boats and RV's, classic cars are considered to be combustible material that create additional hazards when stored with the combustible aircraft in the hangar. However, there are exceptions for motor vehicles if: a) you use the vehicle to tow your aircraft; or b) you use the vehicle to transport you and/or your passengers to and from the airport. In those cases, as long as your vehicle is licensed and registered, it may be stored in the hangar.
- **Records and Files:** Storage of your aircraft records is considered to be a related aeronautical use. However, storage of other records and files, such as your income tax records or old office or personal files, is not considered to be an aeronautical use. These types of records are not allowed in the hangars and need to be stored off-airport because they are unrelated to aviation and are made of combustible materials that create additional hazards when stored with the combustible aircraft in the hangar.

Q: Where did the 500 degree threshold come from as it relates to heating parts within the hangar?

A: The International Fire Code Section 1104.6 "Open Flame" states: "Repairing of aircraft requiring the use of open flames, spark-producing devices or the heating of parts above 500 degrees F (260 deg C) shall only be done outdoors or in an area complying with the provisions of the International Building Code for a Group F-1 Occupancy." The City-owned hangars/storage rooms do not comply with the provisions of a Group F-1 Occupancy. The question was presented in the context of a soldering iron used in the hangar. A standard 15W soldering iron presents temperatures that exceed 540 degrees F and, therefore, may not be used *inside* a City-owned hangar or storage room.

Q: What if I don't have the Material Safety Data Sheet(s) (MSDS) for a hazardous material I am storing in my hangar?

A: The City will be building a database of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for many of the common hazardous materials being stored in the City-owned hangars. A list of these materials will be linked to the Falcon Field website: http://www.mesaaz.gov/falcon_field/, and current copies will be available in the Airport Administration Office. If you do not see the hazardous material in question on this list, please provide the Airport Administration Office with the name of the product and its manufacturer, and we will assist you in finding the applicable MSDS information.

Q: Can shelves be built out of wood, or can metal shelves have a wooden shelf surface?

A: Yes, provided the shelving is not more than 30" deep (front to back). If they are going to be used for storing flammable or combustible liquids, they need to be constructed to comply with the City Fire Code.

Q: What if I have metal shelves that are over 30" deep?

A: First, the City will ensure the design will still accommodate aircraft storage. If it does and the tenant wishes to keep the shelving, we will work with you to request a review by the City's Building Official or his staff. They will evaluate the manufacturer's recommendations for attaching the shelving to either the floor or the structure. If the manufacturer recommends that the shelves be attached to either the hangar floor or the hangar structure, this is allowed as long as the City approves the method for attachment and issues a permit, if required.

Q: Can I store combustible materials closer than 8 feet from my aircraft?

A: Yes. The rule regarding 8 foot separation from combustible materials to stored flammable liquids does not apply to fuel stored inside the fuel tank(s) of the aircraft or other approved vehicle.

Q: Can I use flammable liquids or spray paint *outside* my hangar?

A: Yes, provided you are a minimum of 25 feet from the hangar and you take precautions not to allow paint overspray to reach the hangar structure, ramp surface, or another aircraft or vehicle.

Q: Can I weld or perform other 'hot-work' outside my hangar?

A: Yes. However, any open flame, spark, or other ignition source, including a barbeque grill, needs to be a minimum of 50 feet from any aircraft hangar or storage room.

Q: Can I work on my aircraft or aircraft parts inside the hangar if the fuel lines have been broken?

A: This is allowed as long as you can demonstrate in your aircraft log book that the fuel lines have been broken, capped, and signed off by a FAA-certified aircraft mechanic who is licensed to perform this kind of work. The actual breaking and capping of the fuel lines must be performed outside the hangar.

As always, if you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact the Airport Administration Office at (480) 644-2450. We are happy to assist you in any way we can to help you comply with these rules while still being able to enjoy your hangar. With your ongoing efforts and understanding, Falcon Field can continue to be one of the safest airports in the region. Thank you for your cooperation!