

Airport News

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Meeting Above the Runway Could Ruin Your Day

The aeronautical equivalent of “the perfect storm” at a General Aviation airport such as Caldwell involves fixed wing aircraft simultaneously taking off in opposite directions with one or both NOT transmitting their intentions or listening to their radio.

If this seems somewhat farfetched to you, then perhaps you aren’t flying much on calm days. It’s happened at least twice in the past couple of months and likely happens more often, but I don’t always hear about it. Picture almost any two single-engine fixed-wing aircraft lifting off in opposite directions and establishing a nose-up attitude to climb to pattern altitude. With noses up, neither aircraft will be able to easily see the other. Slightly different headings and timing have prevented disaster, but not before shaking up several pilots.

Luckily, this particularly dangerous problem has one incredibly easy solution and a couple of supporting points that will help everyone operate more safely:

- Runway 12 is Caldwell’s “Calm Wind Runway” and has been for a long time, spread the word;
- USE YOUR RADIO! Transmit your intentions, especially on taking the runway, and listen for other traffic. If you don’t have a radio, get one;
- Run your MODE C transponder in Normal mode so that TCAS-equipped aircraft will be able to “see” you.

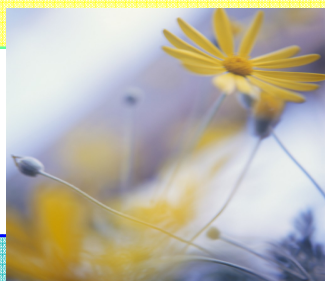
The first point is the single most important preventative measure to prevent such take-off encounters. Runway 12 should be used when winds are five knots or below, regardless of direction.

In one of the recent incidents, one aircraft was TCAS-equipped, but the other didn’t have an operational transponder – AND – wasn’t listening to the radio till after take-off. In the other, I heard the first aircraft announce a take-off on 12 and moments later the second announced for take-off on 30. I was working at my desk and it took several seconds for my brain to process what I had heard. Before I could take any action, they passed each other and were on their way – an unsettling experience even for me sitting in my office!

Please heed these suggested operating procedures and fly safely out there.

New Comm Tower At Hubler Terminal

During the first couple of weeks of May crews from the city and Gem State Communications have been installing a new communications tower at the Hubler Terminal. The tower will provide improved locations for our radio antennas, allow us to be prepared for emergency communications, and offer better locations for airport security cameras.



Bob McGee

On April 9th Bob McGee passed away at 81 after a short illness. Bob was a very strong supporter of the Caldwell Airport. He was also a very long-serving member and chairman of the Caldwell Airport Commission, stepping down last year after serving over 30 years. Bob was a private and corporate pilot and hangar owner, and his wisdom, insights, and sense of humor will be missed.

Trenching Along Aviation Way

In the recent several weeks there have been City of Caldwell crews digging trenches and burying conduit along Aviation Way and also Linden Street. The conduit will provide a pathway for fiber-optic cables that will one-day create a network loop around the entire airport. The fiber will provide a pathway for planned infrastructure upgrades including newer controllers at each of the six mechanical gates and security cameras at those gates as well as other locations. The project will be completed in stages over several years so that we can spread the costs out over several budget years. There is no plan now to use this fiber to offer Internet access to airport tenants, but that doesn't mean that we couldn't make an agreement with an ISP in the future if on-field demand warranted such a move.

Hangar Changes Usually Require Permit

Spring's arrival brings out the urge to fly in some, and the urge to build something in others. Please remember that every hangar is considered a "commercial building" in the eyes of the City. Remodeling or other construction projects in your hangar almost always require a building permit issued by the City's Building Department downtown. If you are planning a project, please contact our Building Permits Coordinator, Kris Wallworth, at 455-4657 and she will be happy to help you figure out whether or not you will need to get a building permit. If you do need a building permit, your plans will first need to be reviewed and stamped/signed in the airport manager's office.