

Safety Seminars



It is early February and it's snowing, again. The problems actually started in December with ice storm after ice storm. Not common for this far north. The New Year began much colder than normal and did not get any better. And now the snowstorms are coming through in waves. Cities are reporting record levels of snow and running over budget for plowing. What's a weather grounded pilot to do?

Up north this is the season for Safety Seminars. They are a good way to help satisfy the aviation needs when the weather will not allow flying for weeks on end. They are also a good forum to refresh/enhance your knowledge base and enjoy the company of other grounded aviators.

Safety seminars have been around for many years for both the ultralight and general aviation communities. This is the 28th year for the Illinois Ultralight & Plane Safety Seminar in Springfield, IL. The seminar's roots are in the ultralight community, but that has not stopped students as well as private pilots from taking advantage of the information and camaraderie.

Other states with a history of ultralight safety seminars include Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, W Virginia and Florida. Although normally general in content, a few have seminars that focus on a selected category of aircraft. The seminar name may reference ultralight, but the topic is aviation safety for all aircraft.

A weather frustrated pilot can locate safety seminars by checking aviation association calendars – EAA, AOPA, USUA or your State Department of Aviation. Another resource is www.faasafety.gov, home of the FAAS Team. You can register and request e-mail notification of events close to you. Refresher courses and ground school events are listed in addition to safety seminars. All make the winter days pass quicker.

With the use of the internet, safety seminars are no longer limited to the cold weather months. Interactive courses are

offered by the Air Safety Foundation, www.aopa.org/asf/index, covering topics of interest for all pilots. Check the index for safety quizzes and other related material. Membership is not required for access to this AOPA website.

All pilots had to pass the Knowledge test (written test) as a requirement for their certificate. Could you pass the Knowledge test today? Depending how long ago you passed the Knowledge test, there have been many changes in the course material and the method of delivery. DVDs, CDs, interactive courses, and sample test are available from many publishers and on the internet. Take one of the sample tests and see how well you do today. If the test score is not good, take a refresher course. All of this review is good preparation for your Flight Review (biennial flight review).

Safe flying is not a given, it has to be practiced.

It's still snowing outside. See you at the Safety Seminars this month.

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Safety First
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