

USPA CALLS FOR DZ STAFF TO REVIEW SAFE CANOPY SEPARATION AND LANDING PROCEDURES

This week's death from yet another canopy collision highlights a disturbing trend that requires the immediate attention of every drop zone owner, S&TA and instructional rating holder. Canopy-related fatalities have increased significantly this year, with 12 of the 16 total fatalities related to canopy control issues. Five of those fatalities are a result of four canopy collisions. One collision occurred soon after deployment, and the other three collisions took place at pattern altitudes above the landing area.

Is your drop zone doing everything possible to educate the jumpers and promote safe canopy separation and the orderly flow of canopy traffic?

USPA URGES EVERY DZ TO REVIEW THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS WITH STAFF PRIOR TO OPERATIONS THIS WEEKEND, AND AFTERWARD ON A REGULAR BASIS.

The Group Member pledge requires each drop zone to "establish and disseminate landing procedures that will include separation of high-speed landings and normal landings." Full compliance means developing and displaying landing area diagrams and/or aerial photos showing landing areas and landing patterns, as well as nearby obstacles. Steps also need to be taken to separate high-performance canopy landings from standard landing patterns, either by using separate landing areas or through time by using separate passes for those who are swooping.

To enforce local DZ rules, consider the following ideas:

- Remind jumpers to break off high enough to allow for plenty of separation before main canopy deployment.
- Insist that all jumpers making standard landing approaches fly standard landing patterns with clear downwind, base and final legs.
- Host canopy skill courses for jumpers of all experience levels.
- Train students using the Integrated Student Program and A-License Progression Card, which include detailed and specific canopy drills and related training that provides a solid foundation of canopy control skills and knowledge.
- Use flight planners to help students and novices plan each jump. USPA can assist with creating a customized flight planner for any drop zone. You can view and order flight planners on the USPA website [here](#).
- Place canopy safety reminders and landing area diagrams in the hangar, loading areas and onboard aircraft to help promote safe canopy flight.
- Provide immediate corrective training for jumpers who are creating traffic conflicts or flying erratic canopy patterns.
- Make safer canopy flight and landing pattern safety a priority, and make sure every staff member is involved with helping to promote better and safer canopy control among jumpers of all experience levels.

Keeping everyone safe under canopy is possible, but it takes constant vigilance and a team effort by everyone at the drop zone. Make sure your drop zone's jumpers and staff members are doing everything possible to help promote safer landing patterns and canopy control.