

Safety Notice SN-32

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HIGH WINDS OR TURBULENCE

Flying in high winds or turbulence should be avoided.

A pilot's improper application of control inputs in response to turbulence can increase the likelihood of a mast bumping accident. If turbulence is encountered, the following procedures are recommended:

1. Reduce power and use a slower than normal cruise speed. Mast bumping is less likely at lower airspeeds.
2. For significant* turbulence, reduce airspeed to 60–70 knots.
3. Tighten seat belt and rest right forearm on right leg to minimize unintentional control inputs. Some pilots may choose to apply a small amount of cyclic friction to further minimize unintentional inputs.
4. Do not overcontrol. Allow aircraft to go with the turbulence, then restore level flight with smooth, gentle control inputs. Momentary airspeed, heading, altitude, and RPM excursions are to be expected.
5. Avoid flying on the downwind side of hills, ridges, or tall buildings where turbulence will likely be most severe.

The helicopter is more susceptible to turbulence at light weight. Reduce speed and use caution when flying solo or lightly loaded.

*What is considered significant turbulence will depend on pilot experience and comfort level.