

—TOWN OF—
MIDDLETON
Wisconsin

March 7, 2023

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Re: Morey Airport Fly-In Special Events

Dear Mayor Brar, Common Council President Olson, and City Alders:

We are extremely disappointed that the three-member City of Middleton (“City”) License & Ordinance Committee, at the request of Capital Flight and with little or no discussion, unanimously approved at its February 15th meeting two upcoming large-scale Fly-In special events at Morey Airport (C29). We request that these Capital Flight Fly-In Special Event Permit Applications be placed on an upcoming City of Middleton Common Council Agenda for an on the record vote by the entire Common Council.

The owner of Capital Flight cavalierly described this large-scale Friday, July 23rd Fly-In special event as being a “rinse and repeat” event. Consistent with prior year’s Capital Flight Special Event Permit Applications that specifically states, “Answer all questions completely”, the question asking, “Have you met with community groups, residents...that may be directly affected by your event? Please List:” was again left blank by Capital Flight. There was absolutely no discussion or consideration given to the adverse impacts on the many Middleton area residents living in the vicinity of Morey Airport, including the fact that Capital Flight continues its efforts to drum up an ever-increasing number of attendees flying experimental and other aircraft using leaded aviation gas – now estimated to be 5,000 attendees for the July 21, 2023 Rock the Ramp.

The City and Capital Flight continue to ignore the significant safety, health, and environmental risks from this additional Fly-In aircraft traffic at this uncontrolled air space airport surrounded by densely populated residential areas. You must surely be well aware of how detrimental breathing airborne lead is for everyone, especially for children.

The Town of Middleton's Trinity Consultants air sampler field testing before, during, and after the July 22, 2022 Rock the Ramp C29 Fly-In event has provided irrefutable evidence that these additional aircraft flying to and from Morey Airport cause an *increase* in ground-level airborne aircraft lead emissions from the additional aircraft attending these Fly-In special events. Despite the overwhelming evidence that this significant public health lead exposure even in the smallest amounts can permanently reduce a child's IQ and have large economic effects on student educational outcomes, the City and Capital Flight continue to recklessly promote this event as "a family friendly event, kiddos welcomed and encouraged!"

If that isn't bad enough in and of itself, the City and Capital Flight also display inappropriate promotional bragging by claiming Rock the Ramp is "The world's largest pre-OSH fly-in bash...and is bigger and better than ever! Eats, libations, planes..." and the annual "Oshkosh Warmup Party" and urges attendees to "come thirsty" for alcoholic drinks.

You must also be well aware that according to the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics, most general aviation aircraft accidents occur within five miles of an airport. The City and Capital Flight have intentionally worked to expand Fly-In attendance to the detriment of the surrounding community and its residents. USGS test results in 2022 found C29 leaded avgas isotopes in the drinking water of two of six residential private wells near Morey Airport. In addition, it is not a question of if, but a question of when a serious mishap will occur involving an aircraft associated with Morey Airport, including the risk to passengers in one or more of the 10,000 average daily vehicles that use Airport Road where Morey Airport aircraft routinely fly at very low altitudes overhead. Some of you may recall the tragic 1974 accident where a student pilot coming in for a landing hit a dark green car driving on a main road fronting the Waunakee Airport because he said the car was the same color as grass!

In 2021, we asked you to stop approving these Fly-In special events at this recreational Airport. You ignored us. We now have credible scientific evidence of the increase in harm and risk caused by Morey Airport special Fly-In operations to people, property, and the environment.

In 2022, we asked you to sell only unleaded aviation gas at Morey Airport and convert the existing 10,000 gallon fuel tank currently used for leaded aviation gas. Instead, you attempted to divert attention from the health dangers associated with the use of leaded avgas by focusing on the possible purchase of a small 1,200 gallon used fuel truck for Swift Fuels UL94 aviation gas. While at first glance this may appear to be a step in the right direction, it clearly is not as it merely serves as window dressing for City public relations purposes. The majority of Morey Airport pilots have already told you that they will consider using UL94 *only if* it is the same price as aviation gas with lead in it. Buying UL94 in such a small quantity increases the retail price *even if* the City decides to offer a small subsidy incentive.

The owners, lessees, and operators of aircraft into and out of Morey Airport are primarily responsible for the property damage and any bodily injury arising from dropping or depositing lead particles on the property and people in the areas on and around C29. When the City of Middleton authorizes and supports special Fly-In events, which have now been shown to increase the lead deposited in the air and water in the many residential areas all around the Airport, it may also become a responsible party for that damage. In addition, the City may

become a responsible party for the increased environmental damage and the increased risk of accidents in all of our heavily developed residential communities. In this regard, all City Council Members should be aware that there is no federal or state requirement that these Fly-In pilots have any liability insurance for any damage they or their aircraft may cause.


Neither the FAA nor any other authority requires the sponsoring or approval of special Fly-In events at the City's recreational general aviation Airport. The City's authorization and support of these events, in light of the obvious damage such events will cause is reckless, irresponsible, and in careless disregard of the health and safety of residents and the environment of our entire community.

Morey Airport provides no essential public services to the City of Middleton or the surrounding municipalities. It is predominantly a recreational facility, and the FBO and SASO and the majority of its users live in municipalities other than the City of Middleton, the Town of Middleton or the Town of Springfield, the three areas most affected by and whose citizens are the most endangered and damaged by the Airport's operations.

We again renew our request that you immediately switch to the sale of only unleaded aviation gas at Morey Airport. We further request that you take proactive, affirmative steps to be among the first in the county to receive delivery of FAA approved GAMI G100UL that can be used by the entire piston-engine aircraft fleet at Morey Airport. Finally, we request that you cancel all Fly-In special events, and preclude the approval of any such future Fly-In special events so as to eliminate the increased damage and health risks to residents, including the thousands of children in our communities.

Sincerely,

Town Board, Town of Middleton, Wisconsin

By: 
Cynthia Richson, Town Board, Chair

The Town Board authorized the Town Chair to sign this correspondence by unanimous consent on March 6, 2023.

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