

Safety Notice SN-26

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NIGHT FLIGHT PLUS BAD WEATHER CAN BE DEADLY

Many fatal accidents have occurred at night when the pilot attempted to fly in marginal weather after dark. The fatal accident rate during night flight is many times higher than during daylight hours.

When it is dark, the pilot cannot see wires or the bottom of clouds, nor low hanging scud or fog. Even when he does see it, he is unable to judge its altitude because there is no horizon for reference. He doesn't realize it is there until he has actually flown into it and suddenly loses his outside visual references and his ability to control the attitude of the helicopter. As helicopters are not inherently stable and have very high roll rates, the aircraft will quickly go out of control, resulting in a high velocity crash which is usually fatal.

Be sure you NEVER fly at night unless you have clear weather with unlimited or very high ceilings and plenty of celestial or ground lights for reference.