

Park Flyer program

This new program was started by AMA because of the tremendous influx of small electric park fliers. Most newbie pilots feel no need to join AMA if they are going to just fly in a park. But AMA is losing membership and has reacted. Although AMA is still a solid, secure, professionally managed organization, the number of modelers entering the “traditional” hobby has diminished a bit, while the number of new, unaffiliated RC park fliers has risen dramatically. Without a response to those numbers, regular membership would gradually decline, and services would have to be discontinued or dues would have to be raised—options that are simply unacceptable. So the AMA developed the Park Flyer Pilot Program to offer unaffiliated park pilots attractive incentives to become part of the solution instead of part of the problem. It’s also hoped that the program will function as a gateway to full AMA membership for park pilots who’ll develop an interest in flying larger, conventional models. Park Flyer models are electric or rubber powered (quiet) and weigh two pounds or less. They are incapable of reaching speeds greater than 60 mph. AMA Park Pilot coverage applies at any location where pilots have access to fly, including parks, field houses, gyms, privately owned open lands, and indoor facilities. On the other hand, the AMA is encouraging the development of new, officially recognized AMA Park Pilot sites in metro areas throughout the US. As an aid in reaching this goal, they have developed a special “How to Start a Park Flying Site” turnkey package so members who are trying to secure a field won’t have to start from scratch when they approach landowners or officials responsible for regulation of public facilities.

Comparison of Open vs. Park Pilot membership

Open membership	Park Pilot membership
\$58/year	\$29.95/year
\$2.5 million liability insurance	\$500,000 liability insurance
Accident/Medical insurance	No Accident/Medical insurance
Fire, theft, and vandalism insurance.	No fire, theft, or vandalism insurance
\$2.5 Million Flying Site Owner's Insurance	\$2.5 Million Flying Site Owner's Insurance
Monthly subscription to <i>Model Aviation</i> magazine	Quarterly subscription to <i>Park Pilot</i> magazine
Flying at all AMA sanctioned contests	Can only fly at non-rule book sanctioned events.
Open Members have access to the Contest Calendar when they receive <i>Model Aviation</i>	Park Pilot members will receive no such notice on any events other than Park Pilot Class C events
AMA cards will remain the same format as in years past	Park Pilot card will be a different from the standard AMA card
No restrictions on type of aircraft that you fly other than established by the Official AMA National Safety Code	Can only fly park flyers or quiet-powered models that meet the class definition. Internal-combustion-powered models cannot be flown with this membership
Voting privileges in AMA officer elections	No voting privileges in AMA officer elections
Open Members can remain members of existing clubs	If an Open member chooses a Park Pilot membership, you may or may not remain a member of that local club depending on how that club views park fliers
Open Members can still fly at the local club field	As a Park Pilot Member, flying may or may not be restricted to just the NEW fields approved only for Park Pilot members (that decision is left to existing Open clubs)

Park Flyer Definition:

Park Flyer models will weigh two pounds or less and be incapable of reaching speeds greater than 60 mph. They must be electric or rubber powered, or of any similar *quiet* means of propulsion. Models should be remotely controlled or flown with a control line, remain within the pilot's line of sight at all times, and always be flown safely by the operator.

A Park Flyer site can be either an outdoor or an indoor venue. When flying at sites specifically designed for Park Flyers, the pilot will keep the model within the established flight boundaries of the field. Members need to take into consideration several factors including piloting ability, weight, size, and speed of the Park Flyer model to determine if a Park Flyer site is an appropriate venue for flying a particular model. The test should be, "Can I fly this model safely and quietly at this flying site?"

Clubs

1) **Q:** Can I fly with my Park Pilot membership at an existing AMA Chartered club field?

A: The ultimate decision concerning whether you can fly at an existing AMA Chartered club's field rests with the existing AMA Chartered club officers. The AMA hopes that you will establish your own park pilot field. One of the intents of the AMA Park Pilot Program is to establish new fields for park pilots in urban as well as rural areas. Think how convenient it would be to travel within a couple of blocks to fly park airplanes and helicopters with your friends.

2) **Q:** How do you go about setting up an AMA chartered club field?

A: The first step is to get a copy of the *AMA Park Pilot Manual* and DVD. You will find these two resources invaluable in providing a wealth of guidance about securing your flying field.

3) **Q:** Can Park Pilot members form an AMA Chartered club?

A: Yes. Forming a chartered club requires a minimum of five (5) AMA members, three (3) of whom must be adults.

4) **Q:** How do we identify the new Park Pilot member? Is the membership card going to be different?

A: Yes. Park Pilot members will have a different color card imprinted with the new Park Pilot logo.

5) **Q:** Can Park Pilots fly at sanctioned events?

A: Park Pilot members may not fly in sanctioned AMA rulebook events. They may participate in sanctioned non-rulebook inter club, intra club, and Class C events as long as the model they fly meets the definition of a Park Pilot model. The event's Contest Director would verify the individual's membership status at sign in.

6) **Q:** Who will police the flightline to see they only fly appropriate aircraft?

A: If the flightline is organized by an AMA Chartered Club, we ask that the club confirm the status of the member, as they would with any AMA member. Rules or requirements that apply to any AMA member would also be applicable to a Park Pilot member with the additional stipulation that Park Pilot members are restricted to flying models that fit the definition of a park flyer model.

Individuals

1) **Q:** What type aircraft may Park Pilot members fly?

A: Aircraft are limited to 2 pounds in weight and speeds of less than 60 mph. The quiet, slow-flying park flyer aircraft allow them to fly in areas in which traditional-style models are not allowed to fly. This opens up the possibility of new fields in both outdoor and indoor venues.

2) **Q:** Are the insurance benefits the same for this membership category as for the regular AMA membership category?

A: No. The liability coverage is limited to \$500,000; fire, theft, vandalism, and medical are not included.

3) **Q:** How much does this membership cost?

A: \$29.95

4) **Q:** Are Park Pilot members eligible to vote in AMA elections?

A: No. They are not eligible to vote in AMA annual officer elections.

5) **Q:** If you fly outside the rules noted for Park Pilot members, what might happen?

A: Your AMA coverage may be voided.

6) **Q:** Can a Park Pilot member be an Intro Pilot?

A: Yes. A Park Pilot member can become an AMA Intro Pilot to train individuals on park flyer aircraft only.

7) **Q:** Is a life membership available for Park Pilot members?

A: No there is not.

8) **Q:** If I am a current AMA member can I convert to the Park Pilot membership category?

A: Yes; however, you must understand that you will lose significant benefits you currently enjoy with your open membership—primarily, the extent of your insurance benefits! These include fire, theft, vandalism, and accident/medical coverage, and the full \$2.5 million in liability coverage will be reduced to \$500,000. Additionally, you will not be able to fly aircraft that do not meet the park flyer definition; you will lose your right to vote in the annual AMA officer elections, and finally, your monthly subscription to *Model Aviation* magazine will be eliminated.

Park Pilot Magazine

1) **Q:** Is the *Park Pilot* magazine available by subscription to regular AMA members?

A: Yes. The additional cost per subscription is \$9.95.

2) **Q:** Is the *Park Pilot* magazine available to non-members by subscription?

A: No. You have to be a member of AMA to subscribe to *Park Pilot*.

3) **Q:** Is *Park Pilot* available on the newsstand or available via single-copy sales?

A: Yes. You can purchase *Park Pilot* in select hobby shops that already support AMA programs.

4) **Q:** What is the cover price of *Park Pilot* at the hobby shop?

A: The cost is \$3.95.

5) **Q:** Can a Park Pilot member get a subscription to *Model Aviation*?

A: Yes. The Park Flyer member would be considered a regular subscriber and charged \$36 per year for *Model Aviation*. Additional postage applies for non-US addresses.

6) **Q:** Can a Park Pilot member choose to receive *Model Aviation* instead of *Park Pilot* magazine?

A: Yes. The \$36 subscriber's fee less \$9.95 would be added to the \$29.95 Park Pilot membership fee. The total would be \$56.

AMA Web Site Information

1) **Q:** Can I apply for a Park Pilot membership through the AMA Web site?

A: Yes. Visit www.parkflyer.org or www.modelaircraft.org and click on Join/Renew. If you are a renewing member, select Renew and choose the "Park Pilot" member option. If you have never been a member of AMA, select New, then the Park Pilot membership option.

2) **Q:** Can I get help with my park flyer model?

A: Yes. The Members Only section of the AMA Web site contains much information. You must be a current member to access this section. Choose the "Park Pilot Partner" menu option.