

Safety Notice SN-41

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PILOT DISTRACTIONS

Pilot distractions from mobile phones have been the cause of several recent fatal accidents.

Modern avionics and personal electronic devices, in particular mobile phones, can easily divert the pilot's attention from the primary duty of controlling the helicopter. Reading charts and attending to passengers are other common distractions.

During flight, be conscious of distractions and vigilant about keeping eyes focused outside as much as possible. Any avionics programming that takes more than a few seconds should be done while on the ground. Mobile phones should be carried in case of an unscheduled or emergency landing but should never be used by the pilot during flight.

When hovering, keep both hands on the controls. If tuning a radio or other task is required, first land and reduce collective pitch. When dealing with distractions in forward flight, reduce power, slow down, and frequently look outside to verify straight and level flight.

Occasionally, pilots neglect to latch a door before taking off. Never attempt to latch a door while hovering or in flight. It is safer to land before closing a door.