



The TOWN OF NORWOOD

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Norwood Memorial Airport

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RE: Safety-of-Flight, Aircraft Noise, Noise Abatement, and Flight Tracks

Norwood Memorial Airport is a public-use airport which has been owned by the Town of Norwood since 1946. However, our flight activities and airspace are not controlled by the Town of Norwood. Instead, the airport's flight activities and airspace are managed by air traffic controllers (ATC) who work under the direct purview of the federal government.

Paramount among ATC's responsibilities is the safe, efficient movement of aircraft to and from the airport, and through our controlled airspace. Therefore, all applicable decisions—to include which runway to activate and the handling of aircraft during flight activities—rest with ATC. And it cannot be emphasized enough: ATC's decisions are based on safety-of-flight first.

The Norwood Airport's two runways—runway 17/35 (the main runway) and runway 10/28—have had the same north/south and east/west orientation since the airfield was first built by this country's War Department in 1942.

Regarding noise abatement and flight paths: In the early 1990s, the FAA conducted a comprehensive noise study of the Norwood Airport. From this study, the Norwood Airport Commission adopted much of what was recommended in this study, to include the noise abatement procedures that address preferred flight tracks for arriving and departing aircraft. This was done to help mitigate aircraft noise whenever possible; and these procedures are strongly endorsed today. In fact, we make these procedures available and known to the flying public in a number of ways. The noise abatement procedures are:

1. Posted on the Town web site
2. Printed out as a notebook insert, and provided to all the pilots and businesses (e.g., flight schools) here
3. Posted on the airfield signage adjacent to our aircraft run-up areas and runways

It should be noted and underscored that **noise abatement procedures are only applicable under visual flight rules (VFR)**.¹ While ATC is very pro-active in asking departing/arriving pilots to follow our noise abatement procedures, the final determination—under VFR—rests with the pilot. Additionally, as with the flight operations at any airport, an aircraft established in the traffic pattern generally follows a rectangular route (see illustrated attachment: Figure 4-3-2 of the *Airman Information Manual*). This flight track doesn't recognize noise abatement procedures per se, since these procedures are designed for aircraft either landing at, or departing from, an airport.

Finally, **noise abatement procedures are non-regulatory**. As such, these procedures are strictly voluntary, though, notwithstanding safety considerations, pilots are generally more than willing to comply in order to keep our abutting neighbors happy. That said, the Norwood Airport can be a very busy facility at times. Pilots and air traffic controllers do what they can to mitigate noise, but the distance between our runways and some abutting neighborhoods (e.g., in Norwood, Canton, and Westwood) is very close. For this reason, the issue of noise and over-flights is always a challenge, particularly so when the airport is experiencing a high volume of traffic.

Thank you.

¹ Conversely, VFR noise abatement procedures are not applicable to a pilot under instrument flight rules (IFR). Under IFR, the pilot strictly follows air traffic control clearances which, with the active runway heading, can take the aircraft directly over abutting neighborhoods.