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KDOT to unveil nation's first Airspace Awareness Tool

The nation's first Airspace Awareness Tool designed specifically to increase the awareness of airspace around Kansas airports has been developed by the Kansas Department of Transportation's Division of Aviation.

KDOT will demonstrate the new tool at **Eudora High School**, located just south of the Lawrence Municipal Airport, on **Friday, Feb. 18th at 8:15 a.m.** The public is welcome to attend.

"One of the goals of the tool is to help developers of tall structures such as wind turbines visualize complicated airspace and, consequently, avoid unsafe conflicts between aircraft and obstructions," said C. Edward Young, KDOT Aviation Director. "If there is a potential conflict, the system will alert the user to contact the FAA."

Kansas has 141 public use airports that are used for various purposes, such as commercial travel, crop dusting and air ambulance services. Each airport not only has real property on the ground, but also has corresponding air space that reaches out at graduated levels.

"There were more than 2,000 airspace analyses in Kansas last year and most of those requests involved wind turbines," said Young. "A number of those cases resulted in conflicts with local air space and instrument landing approaches."

The tool allows the user to input both latitude and longitude to view any desired location in Kansas. Proposed towers can also be drawn onto the application to visualize their impact to the airspace.

“Once finalized, the airspace awareness tool will be available from KDOT’s website. This ‘soft launch’ will give us important feedback,” said Young.

The wind turbine project at Eudora High School gives students an opportunity to apply classroom math in real-world situations. Eudora High School math teacher Scott Keltner hopes to integrate wind turbine data into his classroom activities to give students hands-on experience. The math that is utilized in wind turbine energy development is also used in analyzing airspace.

“This is a perfect opportunity to evaluate the ease of use of the tool,” Young said.

The Future Business Leaders of America at Eudora High School decided to pursue the placement of a wind turbine as a club goal of reducing the carbon and financial footprint of the school.

The KDOT Airspace Awareness Tool was made possible by a grant from the Federal Aviation Administration. The tool has been developed over the last 1½ years working with Burns and McDonnell, a Kansas City consulting firm.

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