

**OTR HOT AIR BALLOON ADVENTURES**  
**DOUG LENBERG, PILOT**  
**PASSENGER AWARENESS FORM**

Welcome to the wonderful world of ballooning! It is a world filled with beauty, excitement and adventure. Please read this form so you can learn more about the sport. We hope your experience will be, as it is for us, a most pleasurable one.

With any form of aviation, however, there are certain risks, as there have been from the time man first conquered gravity and left the ground. It is important that each passenger understands the critical aspects of a flight, and that they assume the risks inherent in flight, including the chance of personal injury and loss of life or property.

In each flight there are three key elements of safety which can be summarized as follows:

1. **WEATHER** - Ballooning is strictly a fair weather sport. Assuming reasonably good visibility, the key consideration is wind speed. Generally, a launch is not feasible when the winds exceed ten knots. Since the winds are lighter and more stable during the early morning hours and tend to gradually increase, we prefer to launch soon after sunrise so that we can complete the flight before the winds become too brisk for a safe landing. High wind landings, while more exciting, can impose an added risk of injury. A determination concerning the weather can usually be made before we leave home, but as pilot I reserve final judgment based upon the weather conditions observed at the launch site. If weather conditions cause cancellation of our flight, we will be happy to reschedule.

2. **EQUIPMENT** - The important considerations here are the structural integrity of the balloon and the generation of heat which gives the balloon its lift. Heat is generated by a burner which utilizes propane to create a rapid and intense flame. The propane, a highly combustible fuel, is carried on-board in several tanks. The burner which is used to vaporize and ignite the liquid propane is very powerful, and very hot. It generates enough BTU's of heat over a hundred houses for several hours.

The balloon in which we will fly is maintained in accordance with requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). In addition, before every flight, we take all reasonable precautions to insure that the entire balloon system is functioning properly.

3. **PILOT JUDGMENT AND CONTROL** - Your pilot is fully certified by the FAA as a commercial pilot, qualified to carry passengers in balloons. The pilot had to undergo specific training in the flying of balloons, and to demonstrate knowledge of weather conditions and local flying hazards.

As it is with airplanes, the most critical times in a balloon flight are during take-off and landing. While preliminary decisions regarding weather and equipment require discretion on the part of the pilot, it is the pilot's judgment and control during take-off and, even more importantly, during landing, that is most critical.

Because of the absence of any directional control in a hot-air balloon, landing sites are limited to locations in the direct path of the balloon as determined by the air currents near the earth's surface. As a result, the approach to a landing site, as well as the landing itself, involves potential contact with various natural and man-made hazards such as trees, fences, power line, and other objects. Actual contact with the ground may also be hazardous if a rapid descent is required to a small landing area. Upon hitting the ground at moderate to high winds speeds, the wind's natural effect on the balloon causes the basket to tip over horizontally and drag to a stop. It is during such a landing that the risk of injury is the greatest, and it is important that you hold on tightly to avoid bumping into objects in the basket, or other passengers. Normally, however, we can gently glide into the landing site at a moderate descent and come to an upright stop with only a few bumps along the ground. You are welcome to bring camera equipment along on the flight, but because of the potential for bumpy landings, you do so at your own risk. We cannot be responsible for damage to your personal property.

It is important to remember that during each flight, and particularly upon landing, the priorities are as follows: (1) Safety of the pilot, passengers and those on the ground. (2) The integrity of the balloon systems. (3) Convenience to the chase crew.

Our ground crew, who give chase and assist on recovering the balloon upon landing, fully understand these priorities which form the basis for my in-flight decisions. Sometimes such decisions must be made in a matter of seconds. Thus, the pilot's skill and judgment are most important.

**SUMMARY** - I hope this information is helpful to you, and that it provides both an understanding of the potential risks involved with ballooning, and reassurance that our flights are conducted in a safe and responsible manner. Since it is impossible, however, to guarantee against adverse weather conditions, mechanical failure, or landing conditions, we must ask that you accept such risks which are inherent in all flights. So that we can be sure that you understand and assume these risks, we ask that you read and sign our Acknowledgment of Personal Responsibility, Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk form before our flight. Thank you for your cooperation in this regard.

While it is important that each passenger understand the information outlined above and in the Acknowledgment of Personal Responsibility of Liability, Assumption of Risk form, it is my sincere hope that this does not discourage anyone from flying in a hot-air balloon. Rather, I believe you will find that having a greater understanding of the sport will enhance your enjoyment and appreciation of this unique experience.

My crew and I look forward to meeting you and to another safe and exciting balloon adventure.

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