



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ROCKET ASSOCIATION

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USEFUL INFO FOR OBTAINING A LAUNCH SITE

Thanks for being interested in obtaining a launch site! There aren't enough people out there willing to put in the time and effort required to secure a legal launch site, and we sincerely hope you will succeed!

Among the first of many things to consider when looking for a launch site:

- What kinds of rockets do you wish to fly? (“[Model Rockets](#)”?, “[High Power Rockets](#)”, both?)
- Who is the fire authority that has jurisdiction? (They will issue the launch permit)
- Who is the property owner? (You will need their permission)
- Will the rockets I fly require FAA waiver?
- Is the launch site safe? (Dry brush? Power lines? Will adults or children not connected to the launch be in the area?)
- Are you familiar with and do you have copies of all the applicable Local, State, and Federal regulations?

The terms “[Model Rocket](#)” and “[High Power Rocket](#)” have specific legal definitions. Some agencies have slightly different or qualified definitions.

The FAA recently revised their regulations so that their definition of a “Model Rocket” now agrees with the NAR and NFPA limits and are exempt from FAA regulation as long as they are operated safely and do not present a hazard to aircraft. For “High Power Rockets” refer to Federal Aviation Regulations [FAR 101](#) and please read the referenced info to understand all of the definitions and regulations.

Launching of “Model Rockets” anywhere in the State of California requires the permission of the property owner and the permission of the local fire department. This fire department permission should be in the form of a written permit according to the California State Fire Marshal (see attached letter). As an example, our club used to launch “Model Rockets” at the now closed Fountain Valley launch site (with a local restriction of “D” engine maximum per the City of Fountain Valley Fire Regulations/Permit). We launch up to the full Model Rocket Safety Code/NFPA 1122 limits at Lucerne Dry Lake. For our Santa Fe Dam launch site we have a permit from the LA County Fire Department that lets us fly Model Rockets as long as we follow the [NAR Model Rocket Safety Code](#). That code limits us to a single G motor as the maximum power because of the field size. The authorities at Lucerne do not wish to write up written permits *for Model Rockets* due to the unique nature of the dry lakebed launch site.

High Power Rocket operators require special licenses from the California State Fire Marshal as well as special permits from the Authority Having Jurisdiction for your launch site AND you need to apply for and be granted a waiver from the FAA. Our club does not engage in HPR, so we avoid all this extra work.

For your specific launch site, you will need to contact the responsible agency yourself. DO NOT just accept the word of a friend “who’s been doing it”. You are the one who will be legally responsible for your launch site. We have attached a partial list of contacts that our club has used for permits and permission. You will have to find your own local contacts. Good luck!

USEFUL CONTACTS:

(This is a partial list of contacts to help save you time and effort. This list is by no means complete!)

Handy information sheet on the different limits for Model and High Power Rockets:

http://www.doug79.com/stuff/HPR_metric9c.pdf

CONTACT **YOUR** LOCAL FIRE AUTHORITY (Look in your phone book) Determine which Fire Authority has jurisdiction for your launch site. It could be your County Fire Authority or it could be a specific city Fire Department. If you cannot find out through the internet, call your local fire station (but be aware that they are not always familiar with Model Rocket permit/regulatory issues at the local station).

For a copy of State regulations:

CALIFORNIA STATE FIRE MARSHAL
7171 BOWLING DR SUITE 600
SACRAMENTO CA 95823
916-445-8375

<http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/>

For Orange County regulations & permits:

ORANGE COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY
180 S WATER ST
ORANGE CA 92666
714-744-0577

<http://www.ocfa.org/>

<http://www.ocfa.org/ocfamain.asp?pgn1=8>

You can click on the "Safety for Schools" link and it will take you here:

<http://www.ocfa.org/pages/ocfa.asp?filename=school.asp> (they link to us!)

For LA County regulations and permits: Contact your local fire inspector.

Schools should also contact their "School Inspection Unit".

<http://fire.lacounty.gov/default.asp>

For FAA waivers for High Power Rockets (read Federal Aviation Regulations [FAR 101](#)):

NAR website info on waivers:

<http://www.nar.org/NARmodeltypes.html#hp>

If you are planning to engage in "High Power Rocket" activities it is recommended that you consult your local phone book for the Federal Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives (BATFE). They can provide a copy of "ATF - EXPLOSIVES LAW AND REGULATIONS (ATF P 5400.7)" which will help guide you as to legally storing rocket motors and/or propellant at home or at the launch site. You may need a BATFE Low Explosives User Permit. You will also want to contact the NFPA and obtain a copy of NFPA Code 1127. Additional advice is located on the NAR website. You will also need various California State licenses and permits (state and local).

NFPA 1122 for Model Rockets, NFPA 1127 for High Power Rockets:

NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
1 BATTERYMARCH PARK
QUINCY MA 02269-9101
617-770-3000

<http://www.nfpa.org/>