



Aviation Investigation Factual Report

Location:	Centerburg, Ohio	Accident Number:	CEN12LA007
Date & Time:	October 5, 2011, 12:00 Local	Registration:	N6403A
Aircraft:	Piper PA-38-112	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of engine power (total)	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Factual Information

On October 5, 2011, at 1200 eastern daylight time, a Piper PA-38-112, N6403A, experienced a nose gear collapse and substantial damage during an off airport forced landing following a loss of engine power in Centerburg, Ohio. The private pilot and passenger were not injured. The airplane, which was owned and operated by the pilot, was on a personal flight. The flight was being operated under 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 in visual meteorological conditions without a flight plan. The flight originated the Blue Ash Airport, Cincinnati, Ohio, at 1100.

The pilot reported that he visually checked the fuel level in the tanks and compared it against the fuel quantity gauges prior to the flight. He stated the left tank contained about 6 gallons of fuel and the right tank contained about 10 gallons. The takeoff was made using fuel from the left fuel tank. Shortly after takeoff, he switched the fuel selector from the left tank, which was indicating 1 to 2 gallons of fuel, to the right tank. The flight continued for another 50 minutes and during the descent to the destination airport, the engine lost power. The right fuel quantity indicator was indicating 5 gallons of fuel at the time. The pilot stated that when he switched the fuel selector back to the left tank in an attempt to restart the engine, the right fuel quantity indicator dropped to zero gallons. The pilot was not able to restart the engine and a forced landing was made in a corn field. The nose gear collapsed and the firewall was bent during the landing.

A postaccident inspection of the airplane revealed both fuel tanks were empty and a small amount of fuel remained in the gascolator. The pilot stated he did not recall when the airplane was last fueled. The reason for the discrepancy of the right fuel quantity indicator versus the amount of fuel in the right fuel tank was not determined.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	56, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 29, 2010
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	September 1, 2010
Flight Time:	379 hours (Total, all aircraft), 99 hours (Total, this make and model), 352 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N6403A
Model/Series:	PA-38-112	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	38-78A0419
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 5, 2011 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1670 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	8 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5163 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-235-L2C
Registered Owner:	WHITTENBURG DOUGLAS M	Rated Power:	112 Horsepower
Operator:	WHITTENBURG DOUGLAS M	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	413,1191 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	5 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:00 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	315°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots / None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	300°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.3 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	21°C / 12°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Blue Ash, OH (ISZ)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Mt. Vernon, OH (413)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	11:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	40.284168,-82.449165(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Sullivan, Pamela
Additional Participating Persons:	Randy Poropatich; FAA-COL-FSDO; Columbus, OH
Report Date:	November 23, 2011
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=82005

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The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).