



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Merced, California	<b>Accident Number:</b>	WPR22LA140
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	April 1, 2022, 12:15 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N9287U
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Bell OH-58A	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 137: Agricultural		

## Analysis

The pilot in the helicopter reported that, he was conducting an agricultural aerial application flight. Before he started the spray operation, he overflowed the field to identify obstacles. While approaching the northeast corner of the fields from the south, he overflowed one set of wires, “ducked down” into the corner to spray, and pulled up as he approached the edge of the field. As he pulled up, he saw wires he had not seen before and tried to hit them with the wire cutter installed on the helicopter. The helicopter impacted the wires, descended, and impacted the ground. The helicopter sustained substantial damage to the fuselage. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions with the helicopter that would have precluded normal operation.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot’s failure to see and avoid wires while conducting an aerial application flight, which resulted in a wire strike and ground impact.

## Findings

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<b>Personnel issues</b>	Monitoring environment - Pilot
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Wire - Effect on operation

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

<b>Maneuvering-low-alt flying</b>	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT) (Defining event)
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### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	62, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Right
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	4-point
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	February 15, 2022
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	Yes	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	February 16, 2022
<b>Flight Time:</b>	2336 hours (Total, all aircraft), 647 hours (Total, this make and model), 1970 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 35 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 35 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4.2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Bell	<b>Registration:</b>	N9287U
<b>Model/Series:</b>	OH-58A	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Helicopter
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	1971	<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Restricted (Special)	<b>Serial Number:</b>	71-20428
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Skid	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	February 28, 2022 100 hour	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	3200 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	178 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Turbo shaft
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	6369 Hrs at time of accident	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Rolls Royce
<b>ELT:</b>	Not installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	250-C2-OC
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	AMERICAN AG AVIATION INC	<b>Rated Power:</b>	420 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	AMERICAN AG AVIATION INC	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	Agricultural aircraft (137)

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	KMCE,153 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	10 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	12:53 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	55°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	/	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	332°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.93 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	22°C / 3°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>		<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>		<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>		<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Unknown

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	37.189404,-120.68928

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Baker, Daniel
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Jason Alves; FAA-FSDO; Fresno, CA
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	July 13, 2022
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class 4</a>
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=104882">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=104882</a>

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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](#).