



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	WHITEWOOD, South Dakota	<b>Accident Number:</b>	CHI98LA109
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	March 28, 1998, 12:25 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N9140C
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 180	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The pilot reported he was flying between cloud layers at 7,500 feet msl, when the airplane started to accumulate airframe ice. He reversed his direction to return to Spear Fish, South Dakota, but the weather continued to deteriorate. He decided to make an off-airport landing in a field. The pilot reported that he circled the field two times. On the third pass, while on final approach, the airplane contacted the lower line of a dual set of wires. The airplane then nosed down and impacted the terrain prior to nosing over inverted.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: failure of the pilot to maintain clearance from obstructions (wires) during an approach for a precautionary landing. Factors associated with the accident were: the pilot's inadequate evaluation of the weather conditions, low ceilings, icing conditions, and the wires which were contacted.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER  
Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

### Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING

- 3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - ICING CONDITIONS
- 4. (F) WEATHER EVALUATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
- 5. (F) AIRFRAME - ICE

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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

- 6. PRECAUTIONARY LANDING - INITIATED - PILOT IN COMMAND
- 7. (F) OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION
- 8. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

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Occurrence #4: NOSE OVER  
Phase of Operation: OTHER

## Factual Information

On March 28, 1998, at 1225 mountain standard time, a Cessna 180, N9140C, operated by commercial instrument pilot collided with electrical wires followed by the terrain while attempting an off airport landing in Whitewood, South Dakota. The pilot was not injured and the airplane was substantially damaged. The 14 CFR Part 91 flight was operating in instrument meteorological conditions without a flight plan. The flight originated from Spear Fish, South Dakota, at 1155 mst, with an intended destination of Walker, Minnesota.

The pilot reported to an inspector from the Rapid City, South Dakota, Federal Aviation Administration Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) that he was flying between cloud layers at 7,500 feet above mean sea level when the airplane started to pick up ice. He reversed his direction to return to Spear Fish, South Dakota, but the weather continued to deteriorate at which time he decided to make an off airport landing in a field. The pilot reported that he circled the field two times. On the third pass, while on final approach, the airplane contacted the lower line of a dual set of wires. According to the FSDO inspector, the airplane nosed down and impacted the terrain prior to nosing over inverted.

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	57, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	March 23, 1998
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	UNK	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	6436 hours (Total, all aircraft), 848 hours (Total, this make and model), 6436 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N9140C
<b>Model/Series:</b>	180 180	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	31-239
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	4
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	March 3, 1998 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	2550 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	16 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	5035 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Continental
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-470-J
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	SPEAR FISH AVIATION	<b>Rated Power:</b>	230 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	JOHN J. COSSETTE	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Instrument (IMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>		<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>		<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Unknown	<b>Visibility</b>	5 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Broken / 800 ft AGL	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	10 knots / 15 knots	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	45°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	2°C / 1°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	SPEAR FISH , SD (SPF )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	WALKER , MN (Y49 )	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	11:55 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class E

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	
<b>Runway Used:</b>	0	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Precautionary landing

## 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>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	44.459114,-103.640502(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Sullivan, Pamela
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	STEVE HOOGERHYDE; RAPID CITY , SD
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	October 30, 1998
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=10840">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=10840</a>

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