# Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

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| **Location:** | Ludlow, MA | **Accident Number:** | ERA26FA329 |
| **Date & Time:** | September 5, 2026, 21:05 Local | **Registration:** | N7653F |
| **Aircraft:** | Piper PA-28-181 | **Injuries:** | 2 Fatal |
| **Flight Conducted Under:** | Part 91: General aviation - Personal | | |

On September 5, 2026, about 2105 eastern daylight time, a Piper PA-28-181, N7653F, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Ludlow, Massachusetts. The pilot and passenger were fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

According to preliminary ADS-B data, at 2054, the airplane departed from runway 14 at Northampton Airport (7B2), Northampton, Massachusetts, en route to Plymouth Municipal Airport (PYM), Plymouth, Massachusetts. Once clear of the runway, the airplane made a climbing left turn to a ground track of 088°. At 2056, the airplane turned right to 158° while continuing to climb to an altitude of 5,000 ft mean sea level (msl). During that time, the airplane made a series of slow left and right turns but remained relatively on course. At 2102, the airplane turned to about 180° and started to climb. Preliminary air traffic control information indicated that the controller at the Yankee Terminal Radar Approach Control contacted the pilot to inquire about the sudden turn to which the pilot responded that he was "correcting." The airplane then began a climbing left turn to about 5,400 ft msl and a ground track of 023°. At 2103, the airplane began a right turn and spiral descent from an altitude of about 5,600 ft msl. The descent rate in the turn reached a rate of 11,520 feet per minute (fpm). As the turn tightened, the descent rate decreased to between 4,000 and 7,000 fpm and the airplane reached a maximum ground speed of 186 knots. The final ADS-B data point was recorded at 2104 at an altitude of 900 ft msl with a groundspeed of 162 knots, a vertical descent rate of 3,968 fpm and a ground track of 005°.

The airplane impacted a wetland area 1,063 ft from the last recorded ADS-B data point. The wreckage path was oriented on a heading of 166° and was confined to an area 50 ft long by 30 ft wide. The airplane was severely fragmented and there was no post impact fire.

The airplane wreckage was recovered and retained for further examination.



This information is preliminary and subject to change.

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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| **Aircraft Make:** | Piper | **Registration:** | N7653F |
| **Model/Series:** | PA-28-181 | **Aircraft Category:** | Airplane |
| **Amateur Built:** | | | |
| **Operator:** | On file | **Operating Certificate(s) Held:** | None |
| **Operator Designator Code:** | | | |

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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| **Conditions at Accident Site:** | VMC | **Condition of Light:** | NightDark |
| **Observation Facility, Elevation:** | CEF,241 ft msl | **Observation Time:** | 21:00 Local |
| **Distance from Accident Site:** | 6 Nautical Miles | **Temperature/Dew Point:** | 19°C /16°C |
| **Lowest Cloud Condition:** | 10000 ft AGL | **Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:** | 3 knots / None, 90° |
| **Lowest Ceiling:** | Broken / 3800 ft AGL | **Visibility:** | 10 miles |
| **Altimeter Setting:** | 29.86 inches Hg | **Type of Flight Plan Filed:** | IFR |
| **Departure Point:** | North Hampton, MA (7B2) | **Destination:** | Plymouth, MA (PYM) |

## Wreckage and Impact Information

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| **Crew Injuries:** | 1 Fatal | **Aircraft Damage:** | Destroyed |
| **Passenger Injuries:** | 1 Fatal | **Aircraft Fire:** | None |
| **Ground Injuries:** | N/A | **Aircraft Explosion:** | None |
| **Total Injuries:** | 2 Fatal | **Latitude, Longitude:** | 42.223396,-72.403814 (est) |

## Administrative Information

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| **Investigator In Charge (IIC):** | Winn, Lucas |
| **Additional Participating Persons:** | Kris Wetherell; Piper Aircraft; Vero Beach , FL<br>James Childers; Lycoming Engines; Williamsport, PA<br>Alexander Girard; FAA/FSDO; Enfield, CT |
| **Investigation Class:** | Class 3 |
| **Note:** | |



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