



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	TAZEWELL, Virginia	Accident Number:	ATL82DA095
Date & Time:	April 6, 1982, 12:15 Local	Registration:	N7841P
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-24-250	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT STATED THAT THE ENGINE FAILED AT 8000 FT IN CLEAR AIR AND LEVEL FLIGHT. HE IMMEDIATELY ATTEMPTED TO SWITCH THE FUEL SELECTOR TO ONE OF THE TWO REMAINING FULL FUEL TANKS BUT THE SELECTOR WOULD NOT MOVE. AFTER REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO SWITCH TANKS USING A PAIR OF PLIERS A FORCED LANDING WAS MADE ON A SNOW COVERED ROLLING FIELD. THE LANDING WAS MADE UPHILL AND THE LEFT WING CONTACTED A FENCE POST ON LANDING ROLL. THE PILOT STATED THAT HE THOUGHT THAT THERE WAS FROZEN WATER IN THE FUEL SELECTOR VALVE.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (C) FLUID,FUEL - ICE
 2. (C) FUEL SYSTEM,SELECTOR/VALVE - JAMMED
 3. FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION
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Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: LANDING

Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - UPHILL
5. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - SNOW COVERED
6. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
7. (F) OBJECT - FENCE

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	49, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 15, 1981
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	3500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1995 hours (Total, this make and model), 2319 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 89 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N7841P
Model/Series:	PA-24-250 PA-24-250	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	3063
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2900 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	0 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3500 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	O-540-A1A5
Registered Owner:	LEONARD W. JOHNSON	Rated Power:	250 Horsepower
Operator:	LEONARD W. JOHNSON	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	5 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 4500 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	40°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Light - None - Snow		
Departure Point:	GAITHERSBURG , MD (GA1)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	HUNTSVILLE , AL	Type of Clearance:	Traffic advisory
Departure Time:	10:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	0 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	0 ft / 0 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	37.119232,-81.509948(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: April 6, 1983

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=72797>

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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](#).