



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Edwardsburg, Michigan	Accident Number:	CEN10CA548
Date & Time:	September 19, 2010, 16:46 Local	Registration:	N4610H
Aircraft:	Piper PA-17	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Fuel exhaustion	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that the airplane's fuel gauge indicated that the fuel tanks were about half full during his preflight inspection. He conducted a 45-minute flight and landed. During takeoff on the second flight, the airplane reached about 150 feet of altitude when the engine started to sputter and subsequently experienced a total loss of power. The pilot initiated a return to the private airstrip and during the turn the airplane stalled. The airplane impacted the ground in a left-wing-low attitude, resulting in substantial damage to the fuselage and wings. A postaccident examination of the airplane revealed that there was no fuel in the tanks.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: A total loss of engine power during takeoff due to fuel exhaustion as a result of the pilot's improper fuel planning.

Findings

Aircraft	Fuel - Inadequate inspection
Personnel issues	Fuel planning - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Prior to flight	Preflight or dispatch event
Takeoff	Fuel exhaustion (Defining event)
Uncontrolled descent	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	45, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	August 26, 2008
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	264 hours (Total, all aircraft), 175 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N4610H
Model/Series:	PA-17	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	17-27
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	October 16, 2009 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1150 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	CONT MOTOR
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	A-65-A
Registered Owner:	Donald E. Duck	Rated Power:	65 Horsepower
Operator:	Donald S. Duck	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

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:		Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Edwardsburg, MI	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Edwardsburg, MI	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	16:45 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Private Airstrip	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

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:	41.835834,-86.224998(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Silliman, James
Additional Participating Persons:	Robert Koneful; FAA South Bend FSDO; South Bend, IN
Original Publish Date:	May 5, 2011
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=77343

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