



FINDINGS

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Central Region

A completed NTSB Form 6120 was not received.

During the course of the investigation, the following information was obtained:

- The accident occurred in close proximity to Dawson Aircraft Services at the Clinton Municipal Airport. A recovery team was sent to move the airplane back to a secure location.
 - o During the recovery, 15 gallons of fuel was removed from the left tank (this tank was impact damaged and leaking fuel. 18 gallons was drained from the right fuel tank.
 - o Both passengers received serious injuries (possible broken back for one, broken ribs for the other). They were both airlifted.
- Little Rock FSDO Inspector Mike Minnix was in charge of the investigation for the FAA.
 - o He collected information from the pilot and reported that on initial takeoff when the airplane was about 150 ft above ground level the airplane's performance and acceleration began to stagnate.
 - o The pilot reported that the engine RPMs dropped to about 1,850 and the airplane began to settle back to the ground. The pilot flared the airplane prior to collision with terrain in an effort to minimize impact forces.
 - o The airplane came to rest about 350 yards from the departure end of runway 31.
 - o Both main landing gears were bent, and the outboard portion of the left wing sustained substantial damage.
 - o Calculating weight and balance, the FAA inspector ruled out a take off exceeding the maximum gross weight.
 - o Minnix reported that the airplane was hangered and did not fly for approximately 3 years prior to the day of the accident.
 - o On the day of the accident the airplane was flown at Holley Mountain Airpark (2A2), which is approximately 3.9 nautical miles to the northwest of Clinton Municipal Airport (CCA)
 - At 2A2, the pilot added fuel to the fuel tanks
 - The left tank initially contained about 8 gallons of automotive fuel (MOGAS) and had 12 gallons of 100 low-lead fuel (AVGAS) added.

- The right tank initially contained about 16 gallons of MOGAS and had 4 gallons of AVGAS added.
- The pilot did a fuel sample and returned to KCCA.
- Prior to departing KCCA for 2A2, the pilot again sampled the fuel and found no discrepancies.
- Following the accident, the FAA took a sample of fuel from the carburetor and found the fuel to contain contaminants barely visible almost of size “like the tip of a lead pencil.” The sample was collected in a small glass jar and the particles settled towards the bottom of the jar “in a ring about the size of a dime, but much thinner and not tightly gathered.”
- A visual inspection of the airplane and engine did not locate any additional anomalies.
- Fuel was not retained, and the source of the contaminants could not be determined.
- A review of the Carburetor Icing Probability Chart from FAA SAIB CE-09-35 found the airplane was operating in an area conducive to the production of ice at glide and cruise power.
- A review of Exxon fuel information ([Gasoline Safety and Fuel Storage Tips | Exxon and Mobil](#)) states that if stored properly, gasoline can be expected to remain “of good quality for six months.”
- A review of an article published by JD Power ([How Long Can Gas Sit in a Car Before it Goes Bad? \(jdpower.com\)](#)) states that “[r]egular gasoline has a shelf life of three to six months...”
- Gasoline without fuel stabilizer is at risk to evaporate resulting in a change of the fuel’s composition

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