

N315AM Accident summary

The uncertificated pilot departed from KDWH at 1 am in N315AM, a piper Saratoga. The aircraft arrived at the small-unlit airstrip the pilot owned near Zavalla, Texas at about 1:30 am. The pilot was circling trying to locate the runway. A witness heard an aircraft over the area near the airstrip for approximately 30 minutes before the aircraft noise stopped about 2 am.

Background: The pilot was uncertificated and without a current medical certificate. The aircraft was out of annual inspection and de-registered.

Facts: The aircraft collided with the tree line on the west side of the open area and impacted the ground. The aircraft came to rest in the open area on the east side of the tree line at approximately 300 yards from the north end of the runway. The ensuing post-crash fire destroyed the aircraft with one fatality. Automated weather at nearby airport KJAS reported Temperature 27 with dew point at 26. It is unknown if weather conditions or pilot fatigue was a factor in the accident.

The inspector reserves the right to change the summary if new facts become available.