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Central Region

Date: September 30, 2021

Subject: CEN21LA425

Contact: Soni Davison – Pilot’s Wife

The pilot’s wife reported that this was a new airplane for the pilot. He had an ultralight in the 80s and thought it would be fun to have another one. He recently purchased it and flew with the former owner in Indiana. He drove it home in a trailer. He then created a grass strip on their property in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. A few days later he took it out of the trailer and folded its wings out. The plan was to taxi it around their property several times so he could get used to the airplane and how it felt. He was then going to pack it up and take it to the Steamboat Springs airport to practice taking off with a longer runway.

On the day of the accident the pilot taxied the airplane in circles to test the brakes and to obtain an overall feel for the airplane. The pilot decided to take off “out of the blue.” The airplane lifted off the ground, but it did not appear to get the same lift it should have. The airplane cleared a couple of fences, but only made it about 20 ft above the ground when the airplane’s nose suddenly lowered, and the airplane impacted the ground.

Mrs. Davison ran over to the airplane and the engine was still running. They were unable to turn it off. During this time the pilot told her that he did not command the airplane down, it just fell. Mrs. Davison was a little unsure because he flew the airplane just fine in Indiana; she was unsure if the high altitude was a factor.

The pilot later told his daughter he stalled the airplane. However, Mrs. Davison was unsure what that was. A stall was described (the airplane is very nose high then the nose suddenly drops.) and she immediately confirmed that was what she witnessed.