

N442JE Crash Statement

On the Morning of 7/22/2022 I was entering my second spray pass of fungicide in a Corn field in Waterloo Illinois in Robinson R44, When the Collective flight control stiffened to a point that the approach to the spray line and the descent rate were unable to be arrested at which point, I used the cyclic flight control to flare to slow the helicopter and arrest the descent but the both flight controls offered the same resistance. I attempted to recover but never regained the hydraulic assistance to assist in the flight approach. At that point I was flying at a ground height until the climbing ground and the skids of my helicopter contacted the ground causing a nose over rollover at which point the main rotor contacted the ground inducing a rotating cartwheel coming to rest on the passenger top side of the helicopter facing the opposite direction.

The helicopter was 15.6 hours until the next hundred hour due. It had a simplex spray system installed with approximately 40-45 gallons of chemical and around 10 gallons of helicopter fuel.

I Have approximately 9600-10000 hours of flight time in helicopters. Most of which is in Robinson helicopters

I also have around 1600 hours spraying and at least 95 percent of my helicopter time is low level with approximately 270 hours flown in the last 90 days.

Jeffrey James Hill