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Investigator-In-Charge / Aviation Accident Investigator
Office of Aviation Safety, Central Regional Office

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Subject: CEN23LA413

Contact: Ed Gassman, Aviation Safety Inspector
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Ed responded to the accident site on September 20, 2023, at the Parkland Airport (7CO0), in Erie, Colorado. Ed also obtained and watched video footage, from a security camera positioned at the fuel farm at the airport.

The experimental aircraft (N820PP, Powrachute LLC, Airwolf 912ULS, powered parachute) was stationed near the fuel farm. The video footage showed the pilot fuel the aircraft and then start the experimental engine.

The pilot then attempted to enter the right side of the aircraft and inadvertently sat on the throttle control. The throttle control was then bent in the "full throttle" position. The pilot was never strapped in the seat with the four-point restraint system and the aircraft departed across the airport. The aircraft entered a grass field, impacted terrain, cartwheeled, and the pilot was then ejected from the aircraft. The aircraft came to rest upright, with a nose high attitude, in the grass field. The pilot was transported to a local hospital where he succumbed to his injuries several hours later.

There were no known witnesses to the accident sequence. An individual at the airport contacted first responders after observing the wreckage located on the grass field.

The aircraft sustained substantial damage to the fuselage, with substantial damage to the airframe tubing. Flight control and engine control continuity was confirmed for the aircraft. The bent throttle control was found in the "full throttle" position. The throttle control was found connected to the airframe, it was intact, but it was bent from the

pilot's body. There were no signs of fluid leaks on the aircraft or at the accident site. The two four-point restraint systems for the aircraft were found in a stowed and secured (latched closed) position. The ignition key was found inserted, and it was found at the "on" position. The wing was found folded up and not in a deployed configuration. There were no mechanical issues noted with the airframe and the engine during the onsite examination.

The pilot's flight helmet and headset were found inside of his pickup truck, which was parked next to the fuel farm. Additionally, the driver's side door of the pickup truck was found open.

It appears that perhaps the pilot was starting the engine for an unknown reason but was not intending to fly at that exact time.

The pilot's flight log and the aircraft maintenance records were not available for review.

Nothing Follows