

July 29, 2016

RE: Helicopter Crash Statement by Kevin Lydin

I showed up to the jobsite at 5:00 am in my work truck & trailer. I sat there waiting for the pilot to show up until 5:20. I then started to unravel all my hoses and getting set up to start filling the helicopter with water and harvista chemical.

The helicopter was facing west with the truck & trailer parallel to its left facing east. The fill nozzle to the spray tank was on the opposite side of helicopter from the truck & trailer. The hoses would go around the backside of the helicopter.

I filled the helicopter for the first time around 5:40 am. I continued filling helicopter every 10 minutes or so when he came back & landed. We did about 8 loads.

On the 4th load I filled the helicopter with fuel until he told me that was enough fuel.

On the last load I filled the helicopter with water & fuel. The pilot told me he was going to do a rinse run and take off to next job & I can pack my trailer back up after he takes off and can head back to the shop. I walked over next to my trailer to wait for him to take off. As he started to lift off the ground I noticed a hose laying over the right skid. I tried to wave and scream at the pilot but he already started turning out of view of me. I watched as the hose slid over the skid until the drylock nozzle on the end of the hose hooked onto the skid. The helicopter lurched to the right & dropped to the ground where it impacted the ground on its right side & nose.

I ran over to the crash screaming the pilots name (Dan). When I got there the pilot was crawling out. I asked if he was okay. He said " he was okay"! We (Dan & I) unhooked the hoses from the trailer & moved the truck & trailer away from the crash because it still had a tank full of jet fuel and I didnt know how far the fire from the helicopter would spread.

Once in the truck I called 911. The pilot (Dan) was driving while I was on the phone with the 911 operator. Dan stopped just down the orchard road from the crash site & told me I have to drive because his back was hurting. We switched side & I continued driving to the top of the orchard where we found a flat spot next to some apple bins. We waited there until the fire department & sheriffs showed up.

