

Michael Hicks
Air Safety Investigator
OAS-WPR

Date: 06/23/2021

Subject: WPR21LA224

Contact: Ronald Green (FAA Inspector)

The following is an email composed by the pilot-in-command (PIC) of N3871L. This email provides the circumstances of the accident, that occurred 06/02/2021 about 0800pdt. The email was sent from Mr. Green to the National Transportation Safety Board Investigator-in-charge.

From: AJ Hyatt
Sent: Wednesday, June 23, 2021, 10:49 AM
To: Green, Ronald R (FAA)
Subject: Re: N3871L Incident

Hello Ron Green,
Jerry Jaeger cell phone is (###) ###-####. He lives in North Dakota and in Yuba City, Ca. The incident of June 2, 2021, where I made a controlled crash into terrain at about 6,000 feet in the Sierras between Emigrant Gap and the town of Washington CA began at about 7:20 A M. My preflight planning included filling the gas completely because the man to whom I was delivering the plane did not want to fill in Reno. I actually filled both tanks into the neck and rock the plane to get the air bubbles out and fill again. We had changed the oil and checked the screen the day before. I checked weather by telephone the AWOS at Reno and at MYV and by watching the weather report from Channel 3. Being satisfied that the plane, the pilot, and the weather were good to go, I contacted NorCal Approach for info on class C at Beale and Flight Following and took off. I promptly began a climb toward 9,500 feet to Reno Tahoe International. At about 6,000 feet I noticed oil temp at redline and lowered the nose to speed up and cool the engine. I had been climbing at 80 mph and leaning progressively as we climbed. The temp cooled a little and I resumed climbing and running slightly richer. The oil temp was not over redline again that I noticed, and I did check it as we went. At 8,500 feet the engine "burpt" (gave almost a backfire sound) and lost rpm. I lowered the nose to maintain 80 mph and called Oakland Center to report engine trouble. He asked if I was declaring an

emergency. I was. He suggested that Blue Canyon was 12 miles south of our position. I was working the carb heat, the mixture, mags, throttle even primed it once or twice. I told Center we could not reach Blue Canyon. When I realized that we were not going to get to a good place, I spotted a place with low brush that we could go into and slow less abruptly than hitting big trees. There was a short, crooked road right beside the brush, but it was very close to a steep drop off on the other side and I feared we might go off if I could not stop straight and quick, so I chose to go into the brush. We stopped with the plane pointed in the opposite direction from when we were approaching. One wing touched a small tree just before we hit the brush and ground and slung us around as we went into the brush. The left main gear was off. Right and nose gear still in place. While still sitting in the plane I called 911 and reported. Soon a plane was overhead circling. I waved, he rocked his wings and circled twice more and departed the way he had come. Jerry got out and walked toward a house we had seen back a little way. He soon returned with a man in a pickup truck. Soon a CHP helicopter was overhead and circled around. He talked to me by phone and landed on a hilltop nearby. Soon rescue and law enforcement and ambulance showed up.

I am very curious to know what caused the engine to lose power. I have flown since 1961 and have more than 6,800 logged hours and this is the first actual inflight unbidden engine failure I can recall.

My home phone with answering machine (###) ###-####.

Thank you for whatever info you can give me to know the cause of engine failure.

A J Hyatt

NOTHING FOLLOWS